



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

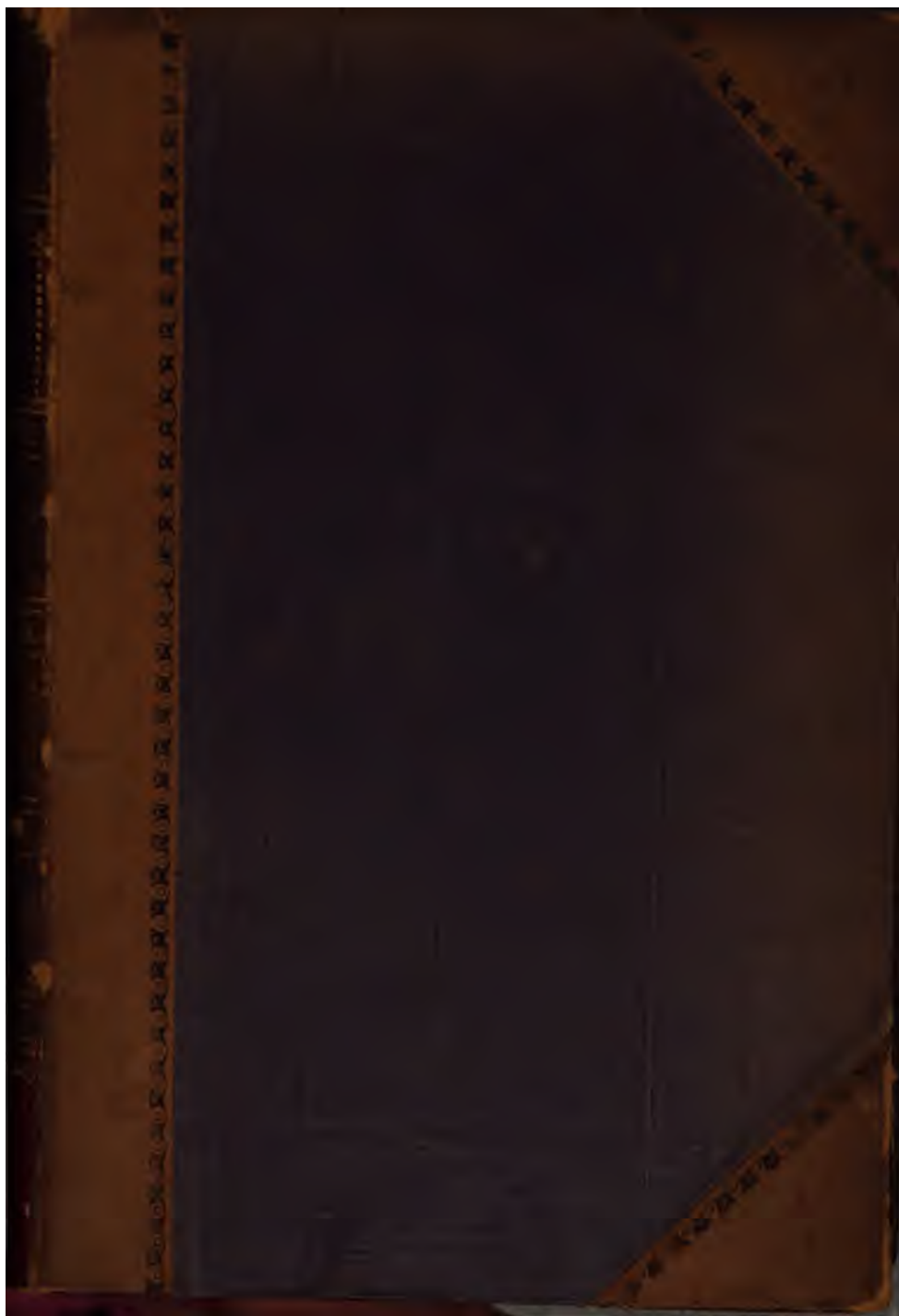
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

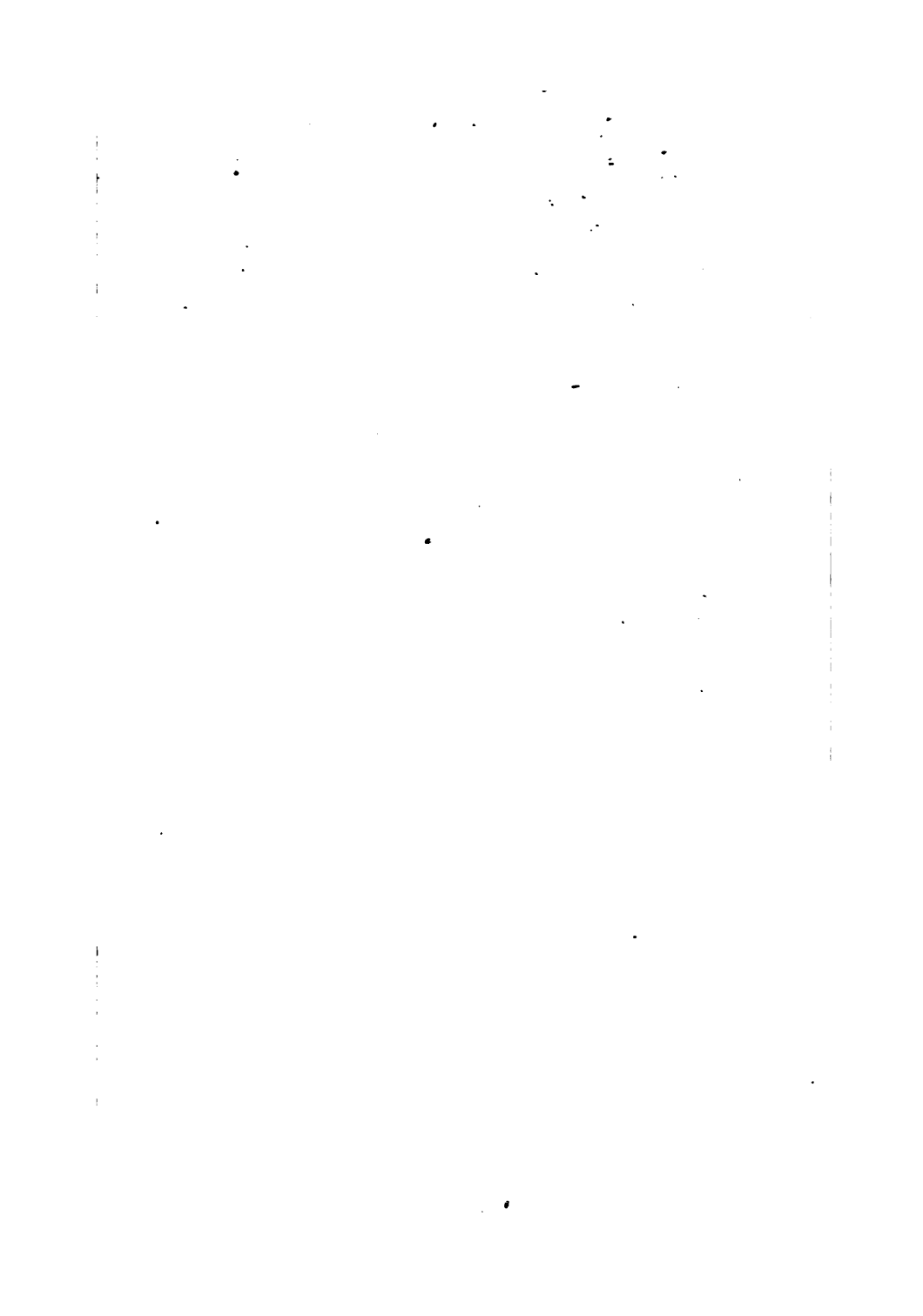


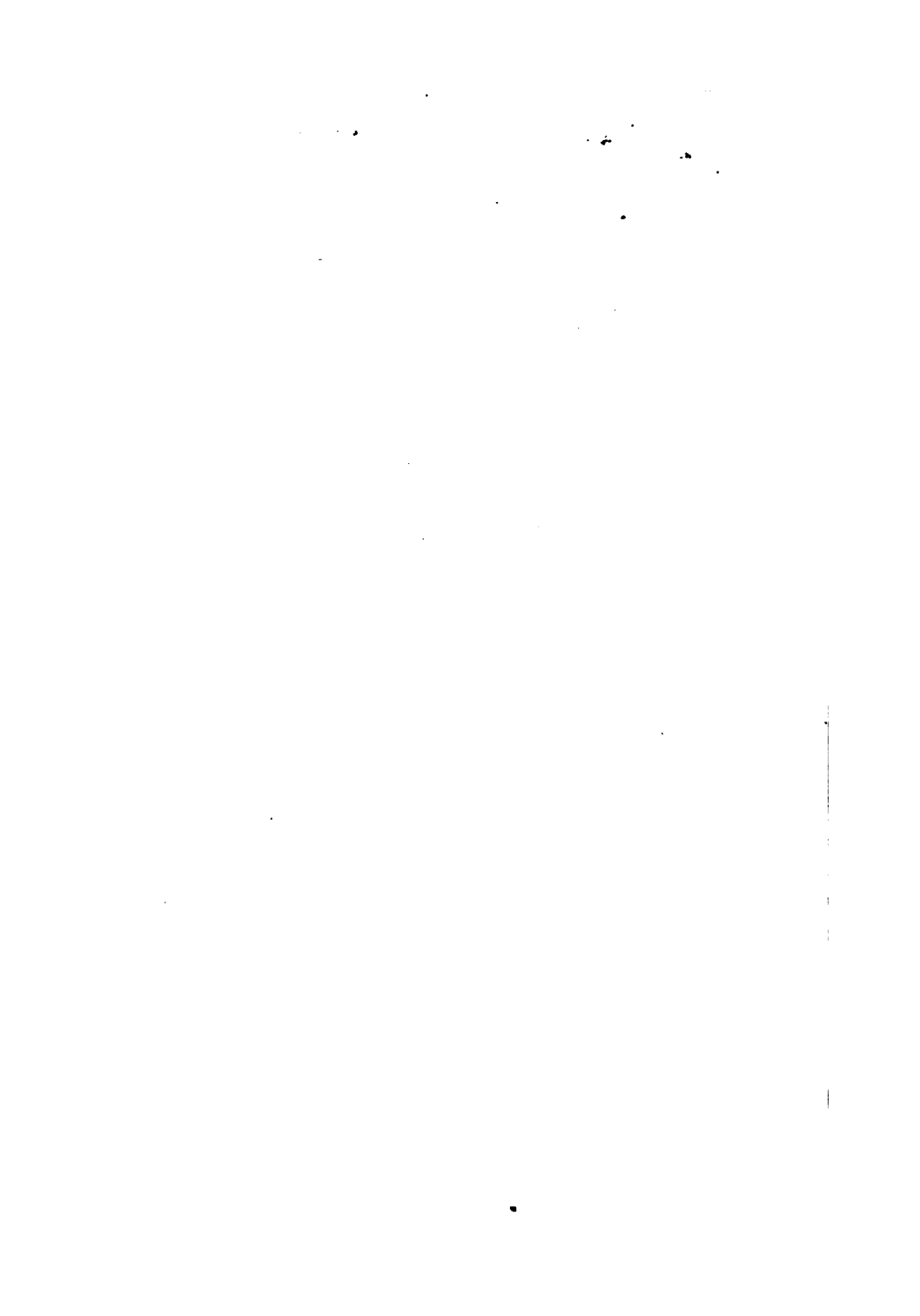


600039012L









THE

PEOPLE'S BLUE BOOK.

LONDON :
Printed by SPOTTISWOODE & Co.
New-street Square.

THE
PEOPLE'S BLUE BOOK.

TAXATION AS IT IS,
AND AS IT OUGHT TO BE

"The object of THE PEOPLE'S BLUE BOOK is, that every Man and Woman in the Kingdom may have, in their own hands, the means of knowing what they *are paying* to Government for the protection of their persons and property, and what they *ought to pay*."

"THE WELFARE OF THE PEOPLE IS THE HIGHEST LAW."



LONDON:
G. ROUTLEDGE & CO., FARRINGDON STREET;
AND 18, BEEKMAN STREET, NEW YORK.

1857.

232. c. 19.

P R E F A C E.

WHO is the Author of "THE PEOPLE'S BLUE BOOK?"

This is a question of no consequence to any one.

But he is one who has always felt a deep interest in their moral and temporal welfare; and it may be worth adding, as a voucher, that by his vote in favour of the first Reform Bill, under Lord Grey's Administration, he made the majority of ONE, by which that second "Bill of Rights" was carried in the House of Commons.

That he is still influenced by the same feeling, this work will be sufficient evidence.

He wishes, however, to make public acknowledgment of the assistance he has received in this undertaking from many writers, and, amongst others, first and foremost, that first and most distinguished master and teacher of political economy, as a science or art, Dr. Adam Smith, the author of "The Wealth of Nations."

Next in order of time, and pre-eminent in greatness

and worth, for piety and learning, that distinguished prelate, Archbishop Whately, the most accurate, profound, and practically useful thinker in modern, if not in any former times; and also eminent as a political economist, being formerly Professor of Political Economy in the University of Oxford.

Next, the late Mr. James Mill, the author of "The History of British India," and of several admirable works connected with political economy.

Also the late Dr. Chalmers, whose name proclaims his works.

Also that great philosopher and poet, the late Mr. S. T. Coleridge.

Also Mr. Tooke, whose great work, "The History of Prices," will be a lasting record of his indefatigable industry, and well-earned fame.

Also many of those useful tracts published by the Liverpool Financial Reform Association.

Also Mr. Mark A. Bourdin, for his compendious "Exposition of the Land Tax Acts."

Also Mr. Henry Ayres, the proprietor and editor of that very useful weekly periodical, called "The Banker's Circular and Financial Gazette," which, for its accurate and extensive information on prices of home and foreign markets, and on all financial and mercantile subjects of public interest, ought to be on the desk of every banking-house and counting-house in the kingdom.

And lastly, the author wishes to notice, what to some readers may not be sufficiently apparent, that his object, in the "Concluding Observations," is to direct attention to the principles which should govern legislators in framing laws generally for human government. If many of the subjects there introduced should, at first sight, appear to be too abstract, or too discursive, and irrelevant to the immediate subject of taxation; it may, on deeper reflection, and in a higher and more enlarged view, be perceived, that the principles desired to be inculcated and impressed, are directly applicable, and essentially important, to all subjects of human action; and are, in truth, of far greater importance than the immediate subject of taxation, which, after all, is but a minor and very trifling detail in the great scheme of human government.

In the latter part of these observations may be discovered, by the attentive reader, the foundation and strength of the whole; and for this, the author wishes to acknowledge that he is much indebted to the clear, but profound thoughts collected and applied from the various scientific writings, known, perhaps, to but few readers in this country, of that great and good man, the Danish philosopher, Oersted, to whose penetrating insight into the laws of nature the world is indebted for the first suggestions which led to the discovery of the Electric Telegraph.

After these acknowledgments, it only remains for the

author to say that he is quite conscious of his many imperfections for the work which he has undertaken; and that, though he has done the best in his power, and life is not long enough to do more than our best, whatever that may be, yet he is quite prepared to expect it will be shown that he has fallen into many errors in trade, and other details, for which he has been, in many instances, very much dependent on information received from others. But if he should ever be called upon to revise this work, he would gladly avail himself of any suggestions for alterations and amendments with which he may be favoured, through his publishers, or through the public press. He might have waited until he had removed all imperfections, and corrected all inaccuracies. But they who have experienced the difficulties of collecting facts connected with trade, even from those who might be supposed to be best acquainted with their own particular branches of trade, will know, that to have waited so long, would have been to wait for ever. It has been said that "they who are ever taking aim make no hits; that they who never venture never gain; that to be ever safe is to be ever feeble; but that to do some substantial good is the compensation for much incidental imperfection."

It was a wise saying of that great compendium of worldly wisdom in his day, Dr. Johnson, that "Human experience, which is constantly contradicting theory, is

the great test of truth. A system, built upon the discoveries of a great many minds, is always of more strength than what is produced by the mere workings of any one mind, which, of itself, can do little. There is not so poor a book in the world that would not be a prodigious effort, were it wrought out entirely by a single mind, without the aid of prior investigators."

In the meantime, the author submits this work, with all its imperfections, to the people, in the hope that, by their united and temperate efforts, the Legislature will be induced to revise the taxation of the country, and to carry out whatever reforms may be best for the nation, and for the well-being of the whole people.

THE
PEOPLE'S BLUE BOOK:

TAXATION AS IT IS, AND AS IT OUGHT TO BE.

THE PRINCIPLES OF POLITICAL ECONOMY AS
REGARDS TAXATION.

THE object of "THE PEOPLE'S BLUE BOOK" is, that every man and woman in the kingdom may have, in their own hands, the means of knowing, what they *are paying* to Government for the protection of their persons and property, and what they *ought to pay*.

It was laid down by Adam Smith, upwards of eighty years ago, that every nation derives its supplies of the necessaries and conveniences of life from its labour, either in the immediate produce of that labour, or from other nations, purchased with that produce.

Also that there is one sort of labour which produces value, and may be called, productive; and another which produces no value, and may be called unproductive. Thus, the farm labourer, and the manufacturing labourer, add, generally, to the value of the materials which they work upon, — that of their own maintenance, and

their employers' profit. The labour of a menial servant, on the contrary, adds to the value of nothing. Though the farm labourer and the manufacturing labourer have their wages advanced to them by their employers, the value of those wages is generally restored, together with a profit, in the improved value of the subject upon which the labour is bestowed. But the labour of a menial servant never is restored. A man grows rich by employing a multitude of labourers on his farm, or in his manufactory; but a man grows poor by employing a multitude of menial servants. The labour of the latter, however, has its value, and deserves its reward, as well as that of the former. But the labour of the farmer and manufacturer is fixed and realised in some particular subject, or saleable commodity, which lasts for some time, at least, after that labour is past. It is, as it were, an accumulated quantity of labour, stocked and stored up to be employed, if necessary, upon some other occasion. This is capital, or, an accumulation of labour and services, which can afterwards, if necessary, put into action a quantity of labour equal to that which had originally produced it. The labour of the menial servant, on the contrary, does not fix or realise itself in any particular subject or saleable commodity. His services generally perish in the very instant of their performance, and seldom leave any trace or value behind them, for which an equal quantity of service could afterwards be procured. The labour of some of the most respectable orders in society is, like that of menial servants, unproductive of any value, and does not fix or realise itself in any permanent subject, or saleable commodity, which endures after that labour is past, and for which an equal quantity of labour could afterwards be procured. The sovereign, for example, with all the ministers and officers of state, and all the judges, and other public servants, with the whole army

and navy, are all unproductive labourers, and are maintained out of the annual produce of the productive labourers. Their service, however honourable, useful, or necessary, produces nothing for which an equal quantity of service can afterwards be procured. The protection, security, and defence of the nation, the effect of their labour this year, will not purchase its protection, security, and defence for the year to come. In the same class must be ranked churchmen, lawyers, physicians, men of letters, players, mountebanks, musicians, opera-singers, opera-dancers, &c. All this goodly company have their value, but they produce nothing which can be stocked and stored up, nothing which could afterwards purchase or procure an equal quantity of labour. Like the declamation of the actor, the language of the orator, or the tune of the musician, the work of all of them perishes in the very instant of its production.

Both productive and unproductive labourers, and those who do not labour at all, are all equally maintained by the annual produce of the productive labour of the country. This produce, however great, can never be infinite, but must have certain limits. According, therefore, as a smaller or greater proportion of it is in any one year employed in maintaining unproductive hands, the more in the one case, and the less in the other, will remain for the productive, and the next year's produce will be greater or smaller accordingly; the whole annual produce, the spontaneous productions of the earth only excepted, being the effect of productive labour.

The whole annual produce of the land and labour of every country, though ultimately destined for supplying the consumption of its inhabitants, and for procuring a revenue to them; yet, when it first comes either from the ground, or from the hands of the productive la-

bourers, naturally divides itself into two parts. One of them, and generally the largest, is, in the first place, destined for replacing capital, or for renewing the provisions, materials, and finished work, which had been withdrawn from capital; the other for constituting revenue either to the owner of this capital, as the profit of his stock, or to some other person, as the rent of his land. Thus, of the profit of land, one part replaces the capital of the farmer, the other pays his profit and the rent of the landlord; and thus constitutes a revenue both to the owner of this capital, as the profits of his stock, and to some other person, as the rent of his land.

Of the produce of a great manufactory, in the same manner, one part, and that always the largest, replaces the capital of the undertaker of the work, the other pays his profit; and thus constitutes a revenue to the owner of this capital.

That part of the annual produce of the land and labour of any country which replaces capital, never is immediately employed to maintain any but productive hands. It pays the wages of productive labour only. That which is immediately destined for constituting revenue, either as profit or as rent, may maintain, indifferently, either productive or unproductive hands.

Whatever part of his stock a man employs as capital, he always expects it to be replaced to him with a profit. He employs it, therefore, in maintaining productive hands only; and after having served as capital to him, it constitutes revenue to them. Whenever he employs any part of it in maintaining unproductive hands of any kind, that part is, from that moment, withdrawn from his capital, and placed in his stock reserved for immediate consumption.

Unproductive labourers, and those who do not labour at all, are all maintained by revenue; either, first, by that part of the annual produce which is originally

destined for constituting a revenue to some particular persons, as rent of land, or profits of stock ; or, secondly, by that part which, though originally destined for replacing capital, and for maintaining productive labourers only, yet, when it comes into their hands, whatever part of it is over and above their necessary subsistence, may be employed in maintaining, indifferently, either productive or unproductive hands. Thus, not only the great landlord, or the rich merchant, but even the common workman, if his wages be considerable, may maintain a menial servant; or he may sometimes go to a play or a puppet-show, and so contribute his share towards maintaining one set of unproductive labourers; or he may pay some taxes, and thus help to maintain another set, more dignified, perhaps, but equally unproductive.

No part of the annual produce, however, which had been originally destined to replace capital, is ever directed towards maintaining unproductive hands, till after it has put into motion its full complement of productive labour, or all that it could put into motion in the way in which it was employed. The workman must have earned his wages by work done, before he can employ any part of them in this manner. That part, too, is generally but a small one. It is his spare revenue only, of which productive labourers have seldom a great deal. They generally have some, however; and in the payment of taxes, the greatness of their number compensates the smallness of their contribution. The rent of land and the profits of stock are everywhere, therefore, the principal sources from which unproductive hands derive their subsistence. These are the two sorts of revenue of which the owners have, generally, most to spare. They might both maintain indifferently either productive or unproductive hands. They seem, however, to have some predilection

for the latter. The expenses of a great lord feed, generally, more idle than industrious people. The rich merchant, though with his capital he maintains industrious people only, yet by his expenses, that is, by the employment of his revenue, he feeds commonly the very same sort as the great lord.

The proportion, therefore, between the productive and unproductive hands depends very much, in every country, upon the proportion between that part of the annual produce which, as soon as it comes either from the ground or from the hands of the productive labourers, is destined for replacing capital, and that which is destined for constituting revenue, either as rent or as profit. This proportion is very different in rich from what it is in poor countries.

Thus, at present, in the wealthy countries of Europe, a very large, frequently the largest, portion of the produce of the land is destined for replacing the capital of the rich and independent farmer; the other for paying his profits, and the rent of the landlord. But anciently, during the prevalency of the feudal government, a very small portion of the produce was sufficient to replace the capital employed in cultivation.

In the wealthy countries of Europe great capitals are, at present, employed in trade and manufactures. In the ancient state, the little trade that was stirring, and the few homely and coarse manufactures that were carried on, required but very small capitals.

That part of the annual produce, therefore, which, as soon as it comes either from the ground or from the hands of the productive labourers, is destined for replacing capital, is not only much greater in rich than in poor countries, but bears a much greater proportion to that which is immediately destined for constituting revenue, either as rent or as profit. The funds destined for the maintenance of productive labour are not only

much greater in the former than in the latter, but bear a much greater proportion to those which, though they may be employed to maintain either productive or unproductive hands, have generally a predilection for the latter.

The proportion between those different funds necessarily determines, in every country, the general character of the inhabitants as to industry or idleness.

The idleness of the greater part of the people who are maintained out of revenue, corrupts the industry of those who ought to be maintained by the employment of capital, and renders it less advantageous to employ capital there than in other places.

The proportion between capital and revenue, therefore, seems everywhere to regulate the proportion between industry and idleness. Wherever capital predominates, industry prevails; wherever revenue, idleness. Every increase or diminution of capital, therefore, naturally tends to increase or diminish the real quantity of industry, the number of productive hands, and, consequently, the exchangeable value of the annual produce of the land and labour of the country, the real wealth and revenue of all its inhabitants. Capitals are increased by savings, and diminished by prodigality and misconduct.

Whatever a person saves from his revenue he adds to his capital, and either employs it himself in maintaining an additional number of productive hands, or enables some other person to do so, by lending it to him at interest, that is, for a share of the profits. As the capital of an individual can be increased only by what he saves from his annual revenue, or annual gains, so the capital of a society, which is the same with that of all the individuals who compose it, can be increased only in the same manner.

Saving, and not industry, is the immediate cause of

the increase of capital. Industry provides the subject which saving accumulates. But whatever industry might acquire, if saving did not accumulate and store up the capital would never be greater.

Saving, by increasing the fund which is destined for the maintenance of productive hands, tends to increase the number of those hands whose labour adds to the value of the subject upon which it is bestowed. It tends, therefore, to increase the exchangeable value of the annual produce of the land and labour of the country. It puts into motion an additional quantity of industry, which gives an additional value to the annual produce.

What is annually saved is as regularly consumed as what is annually spent, and nearly in the same time too; but it is consumed by a different set of people. That portion of his revenue which a rich man annually spends is, in most cases, consumed by idle guests and menial servants, who leave nothing behind them in return for their consumption. That portion which he annually saves, as for the sake of the profit it is immediately employed as capital, is consumed in the same manner, and nearly in the same time too, but by a different set of people, by labourers, manufacturers, and artificers, who reproduce, with a profit, the value of their annual consumption. The consumption is the same, but the consumers are different.

By what a frugal man annually saves he not only affords maintenance to an additional number of productive hands for that or the ensuing year, but he establishes, as it were, a perpetual fund for the maintenance of an equal number in all times to come. The perpetual allotment and destination of this fund is always guarded by a very powerful principle, the plain and evident interest of every individual to whom any share of it shall ever belong. No part of it can ever

— afterwards be employed to maintain any but productive hands without an evident loss to the person who thus perverts it from its proper destination.

The prodigal perverts it in this manner: by not confining his expenses within his income he encroaches upon his capital. He pays the wages of idleness with those funds which the frugality of his forefathers had intended for the maintenance of industry. By diminishing the funds destined for the employment of productive labour, he necessarily diminishes, so far as it depends upon him, the quantity of that labour which adds a value to the subject upon which it is bestowed, and, consequently, the value of the annual produce of the land and labour of the whole country, the real wealth and revenue of its inhabitants. If the prodigality of some were not compensated by the frugality of others, the conduct of every prodigal, by feeding the idle with the bread of the industrious, tends not only to beggar himself, but to impoverish his country.

Though the expense of the prodigal should be altogether in home-made, and no part of it in foreign commodities, its effect upon the productive funds of the society would still be the same. Every year there would still be a certain quantity of food and clothing which ought to have maintained productive, employed in maintaining unproductive hands. Every year, therefore, there would still be some diminution in what would otherwise have been the value of the annual produce of the land and labour of the country.

This expense, it may be said, not being in foreign goods, and not occasioning any exportation of gold and silver, the same quantity of money would remain in the country as before. But if the quantity of food and clothing, which was thus consumed by unproductive, had been distributed among productive hands, they would have reproduced, together with a profit, the full

value of their consumption. The same quantity of money would in this case equally have remained in the country, and there would, besides, have been a reproduction of an equal value of consumable goods. There would have been two values instead of one.

The same quantity of money cannot long remain in any country in which the value of the annual produce diminishes. The sole use of money is to circulate consumable goods. By means of it provisions, materials, and finished work, are bought and sold, and distributed to their proper customers. The quantity of money, therefore, which can be annually employed in any country must be determined by the value of the consumable goods annually circulated within it. These must consist either in the immediate produce of the land and labour of the country itself, or in something which had been purchased with some part of that produce. Their value, therefore, must diminish as the value of that produce diminishes, and along with it the quantity of money which can be employed in circulating them. But the money which, by this annual diminution of produce, is annually thrown out of domestic circulation, will not be allowed to be idle. The interest of whoever possesses it requires that it should be employed. But, having no employment at home, it will, in spite of all laws and prohibitions, be sent abroad, and employed in purchasing consumable goods which may be of some use at home. Its annual exportation will, in this manner, continue for some time to add something to the annual consumption of the country beyond the value of its own annual produce. What in the day of its prosperity had been saved from that annual produce, and employed in purchasing gold and silver, will contribute, for some little time, to support its consumption in adversity. The exportation of gold and silver is, in this case, not the

•

cause, but the effect of its declension, and may even for some little time alleviate the misery of that declension.

The quantity of money, on the contrary, must in every country naturally increase as the value of the annual produce increases. The value of the consumable goods annually circulated within the society being greater, will require a greater quantity of money to circulate them. A part of the increased produce, therefore, will naturally be employed in purchasing, wherever it is to be had, the additional quantity of gold and silver necessary for circulating the rest. The increase of those metals will, in this case, be the effect, not the cause, of the public prosperity. Gold and silver are purchased everywhere in the same manner. The food, clothing, lodging, the revenue and maintenance of all those whose labour or stock is employed in bringing them from the mine to the market, is the price paid for them in Peru as well as in England. The country which has this price to pay will never be long without the quantity of those metals which it has occasion for, and no country will ever long retain a quantity which it has no occasion for.

Whatever, therefore, we may imagine the real wealth and revenue of a country to consist in, whether in the value of the annual produce of its land and labour, as plain reason seems to dictate, or in the quantity of the precious metals which circulate within it, as vulgar prejudices suppose; in either view, every prodigal appears to be a public enemy, and every frugal man a public benefactor.

The effects of misconduct are often the same as those of prodigality. Every injudicious and unsuccessful project in agriculture, mines, fisheries, trade, or manufactures, tends in the same manner to diminish the funds destined for the maintenance of productive labour.

In every such project, though the capital is consumed by productive hands only, yet, as by the injudicious manner in which they are employed, they do not reproduce the full value of their consumption, there must always be some diminution in what would otherwise have been the productive funds of the society.

It can seldom happen, indeed, that the circumstances of a great nation can be much affected either by the prodigality, or misconduct, of individuals; the profusion or imprudence of some being always more than compensated by the frugality and good conduct of others.

Great nations are never impoverished by private, though they generally are by public, prodigality and misconduct. The whole, or almost the whole, public revenue, is in most countries employed in maintaining unproductive hands. Such are the people who compose a numerous and splendid court, a great ecclesiastical establishment, great fleets and armies, who in time of peace produce nothing, and in time of war acquire nothing which can compensate the expense of maintaining them, even while the war lasts. Such people, as they themselves produce nothing, are all maintained by the produce of other men's labour.

When multiplied, therefore, to an unnecessary number, they may in a particular year consume so great a share of this produce, as not to leave a sufficiency for maintaining the productive labourers, who should reproduce it next year. The next year's produce, therefore, will be less than that of the foregoing, and if the same disorder should continue, that of the third year will be still less than that of the second.

Those unproductive hands, who should be maintained by a part only of the spare revenue of the people, may consume so great a share of their whole revenue, and thereby oblige so great a number to encroach upon

their capitals, upon the funds destined for the maintenance of productive labour, that all the frugality and good conduct of individuals may not be able to compensate the waste and degradation of produce occasioned by this violent and forced encroachment.

The annual produce of the land and labour of any nation can be increased in its value by no other means than by increasing either the number of its productive labourers, or the productive powers of those labourers who had before been employed. The number of its productive labourers, it is evident, can never be much increased, but by an increase of capital, or of the funds destined for maintaining them. The productive powers of the same number of labourers can be increased only by some addition and improvement to those machines and instruments which facilitate and abridge labour; or by a more proper division and distribution of employment. In either case additional capital is almost always required.

The profusion of Government has undoubtedly retarded the natural progress of this country towards wealth and improvement, but it has not been able to stop it. In the midst of all the exactions of Government, capital has been silently and gradually accumulated by the private frugality and good conduct of individuals, by their universal and continual effort to better their own condition. This country, however, has never been blessed with a frugal government, and it is the highest impertinence and presumption in Government to pretend to watch over the economy of private people, and to restrain their expenses by sumptuary laws, or to interfere with their trade with foreign nations.

Sovereigns and ministers are themselves always, and without any exception, the greatest spendthrifts in the society. Let them look well after their own expenses,

and they may safely trust private people with theirs. If their own extravagance do not ruin the state, that of their subjects never will.

The revenue which must defray the expenses of defending the society, and of supporting the dignity of the sovereign, or chief magistrate, and all the other necessary expenses of Government, must be drawn either from some fund which peculiarly belongs to the sovereign or commonwealth, or from the revenue of the people.

The private revenue of individuals arises ultimately from three different sources, — Rent, Profit, and Wages. Every tax must finally be paid from some one or other of these three different sorts of revenue, or from all of them indifferently.

The following may be taken as the four primary rules, or maxims, with regard to taxes in general: —

1. The subjects of every State ought to contribute towards the support of the Government, as nearly as possible, in proportion to the property which they respectively enjoy, and the protection of the State.

2. The tax which each individual is bound to pay ought to be fixed and certain. The time of payment, the manner of payment, the quantity to be paid, ought all to be clear and plain to the contributor and to every other person. The certainty of what each individual ought to pay is, in taxation, a matter of so great importance, that a very considerable degree of inequality, it appears from the experience of all nations, is not nearly so great an evil as a very small degree of uncertainty.

3. Every tax ought to be levied at the time, and in the manner, in which it is most likely to be convenient for the contributor to pay it.

4. Every tax ought to be so contrived as to take out, and to keep out, of the pockets of the people as little as

possible over and above what it brings into the public treasury of the State.

With respect to taxes on rent, it is obvious that the share of the rent of land, which may be taken to defray the expenses of the government, does not affect the industry of the country. The cultivation of the land depends upon the capitalist, who devotes himself to that occupation when it affords him the ordinary profits of stock. To him it is a matter of perfect indifference whether he pay the surplus, in the shape of rent, to an individual proprietor, or, in that of revenue, to a government collector.

With respect to a tax on profits, if a direct tax, it falls entirely on the owners of capital; and as all capitalists would be affected equally, there would be no motive to the man engaged in any one production to remove his capital to any other. There would be the same demand and the same supply; there would also be the same quantity of money; and, therefore, the money value of everything would remain the same as before.

With respect to a direct tax on wages, this is a question of greater complexity.

If wages should rise, the tax would not fall upon the labourer. If wages did not rise, or not to the amount of the tax, it would fall, either wholly or in part, upon the labourer.

It may be taken, however, as a general rule, that wages of labour are raised in consequence of a tax to an amount the same as that of the tax; and, therefore, that such a tax does not fall upon the labourer.

If this tax do not fall upon the labourer, the next question is, Upon whom does it fall? A rise in the wages of labour is always attended with a fall in the profits of stock; and as the labourer and the capitalist divide between them the produce of their labour and capital, exactly as the share of the one is increased that

of the other is diminished. A tax upon wages, therefore, falls upon the capitalist, and is the same as a tax, to an equal amount, upon the profits of stock.

The effect of these taxes upon prices may be easily seen. A tax upon rent would produce no alteration in the price of anything. Rent is the effect of price; and the effect cannot operate upon the cause. That a tax upon profits would not alter price has already been shown.

As to the tax upon wages, in the case in which wages rise, it may also be seen that the capital and produce of the country remain the same, the amount of demand and supply the same, and the value of money the same. The aggregate of prices, therefore, one thing being compensated by another, is the same.

Taxes on commodities, it may be taken as a general rule, fall wholly upon the consumers.

A tax upon the produce of land, — a tax upon corn, for example, falls upon the consumer.

Tithes and poor-rates, being taxes on the produce of land, are paid by the consumer.

A tax upon land, if it affect the price of produce, must be paid by the consumer, as the produce to be raised must yield not only the ordinary profits of stock, but the tax also.

Taxes upon the transfer of property fall upon the purchaser.

Legacy duties fall upon the receivers.

Law taxes, which are levied chiefly in the form of stamps and fees, evidently fall upon the suitors; and are, it is equally evident, a tax upon the demand for justice. There is no peculiar propriety in taxing a man because he has a right which is unfortunately disputed. But there is the greatest of all improprieties in taxing a man because he has sustained an act of injustice. It is very evident that all such taxes are a bar in the way

of obtaining a redress of injury; and just in so far as anything obstructs the redress of injury, injustice is promoted. A tax upon justice, therefore, is a premium upon injustice.

Of all the branches of political knowledge, the most important, and the most applicable to the purposes of government, is that which considers the nature and the origin of wealth. It is true that the ultimate object of government, and, indeed, the ultimate object of every individual, is happiness. But we know that the means by which almost every man endeavours to increase his happiness, or, to use the common phrase, to better his condition, is by increasing his wealth. And to assist, or rather to protect him in doing this, should be the chief object of every government. All the fraud, and almost all the violence, for the prevention of which government is submitted to, arise from the attempts of mankind to deprive one another of the fruits of their respective industry and frugality. To counteract these attempts, a public revenue must be raised and expended. But it is clearly the duty of every government to raise no more than is necessary for these purposes; and to raise it in the manner least inconvenient to the persons paying it; also to apply it faithfully to the purposes for which it is raised.

Wealth consists, not of money, but of the things which money can purchase; and, therefore, it is not lessened by resorting to the cheapest market, nor augmented by augmenting the nominal value of the tokens by which it is measured; but it increases with the increasing productiveness of labour, and diminishes if more labour be required to produce a given result; for the profits of commerce consist not in what is given, but in what is received. And so, as Adam Smith has said, "Every system which endeavours, either by extraordinary encouragements, to draw towards a particular

species of industry a greater share of the capital of the society than would naturally go to it, or, by extraordinary restraints, to force from a particular species of industry some share of the capital which would otherwise be employed in it, is in reality subversive of the great purpose which it means to promote. It retards, instead of accelerating, the progress of the society towards real wealth and greatness; and diminishes, instead of increasing, the real value of the annual produce of its land and labour."

"All systems," he adds, "either of preference or of restraint, therefore, being thus completely taken away, the obvious and simple system of natural liberty establishes itself of its own accord. According to that system, the sovereign has only three duties to attend to: first, the duty of protecting the society from the violence and invasion of other independent societies; secondly, the duty of protecting, as far as possible, every member of the society from the injustice or oppression of every other member of it, or the duty of establishing an exact administration of justice; and, thirdly, the duty of erecting and maintaining certain public works, and certain public institutions, which it can never be for the interest of any individual, or small number of individuals, to erect and maintain."

Before the principles of Political Economy were understood as an art or science, wealth was supposed to consist of gold and silver. All that was aimed at was its acquisition and retention, in a metallic form. The means of effecting this, were supposed by countries possessing native deposits of the precious metals, to be obvious, and easy; simply by the extraction of silver from mines, and gold from auriferous sands, and to prohibit the exportation of either. This was the policy of Spain and Portugal. The countries not possessing a native supply, it was supposed could obtain it only by

what was called a favourable balance of trade, that is to say, by exporting to a value exceeding that of their imports, and receiving the difference in money ; and their object was to retain the money so acquired, by prohibiting its exportation. Such was the opinion prevailing in this country, as very clearly expressed in the preamble of the statute 5 Rich. II. c. 2, one among the many statutes and proclamations by which this prohibition was for centuries enforced.

But Sir James Stewart, who preceded Adam Smith as a writer on Political Economy, enlightened the people of this country by showing them that — “ It is not by the importation of foreign commodities, and by the exportation of gold and silver, that a nation becomes poor ; it is by consuming those commodities when imported. The moment the consumption begins the balance turns. Nations which trade to India by sending out gold and silver for a return of superfluities of a most consumable texture, the consumption of which they prohibit at home, do not spend their own specie, but that of their neighbours, who purchase the returns of it for their own consumption. Consequently a nation may become immensely rich by the constant exportation of specie, and importation of consumable commodities.” But though Sir James Stewart was one of the earliest teachers of Political Economy, and corrected many errors prevalent in his time, yet he left many, and himself fell into many others, which were reserved for correction by the more accurate mind and enlarged views of Adam Smith, who laid down the principles of Political Economy, as the art, or science, which points out the institutions and habits most conducive to the production and accumulation of wealth, and which are generally recognised and acknowledged to this day as sound principles on all the most material points, and equally applicable to all nations.

Adam Smith may, therefore, be considered the founder of Modern Political Economy, whether it be treated as a science or as an art. He considered it as an art, for he says, "Political Economy proposes two distinct objects: first, to provide a plentiful revenue, or subsistence, for the people, or, more properly, to enable them to provide such a revenue or subsistence for themselves; and, secondly, to supply the state or common weal with a revenue sufficient for the public service. It proposes to enrich both the people and the sovereign." He points out the means by which the duties of the sovereign may best be performed, and the necessary public revenue provided, and, in fact, gives a treatise on the art of good government.

From the great work of that eminent writer, and from the works of a few other succeeding writers, on political economy, the foregoing remarks are chiefly abridged, and are here introduced as guides and landmarks for the reader of the following pages, or as containing the leading principles which should govern the system of taxation adopted by an enlightened Government over a free people.

By these principles shall now be tried

TAXATION AS IT IS.

THE following statement of the national income and expenditure, after deducting the repayments, allowances, discounts, drawbacks, and bounties in the nature of drawbacks, is taken from the Blue Book, No. 252, entitled "Finance Accounts of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, for the financial year 1855-6, ended 31st March, 1856."

For the purpose of comparison, and to present the account in a more correct and intelligible form to the general reader, Mr. Henry Lloyd Morgan's statement of the same account, taken from Tract No. 18 of the Liverpool Financial Reform Association, is also added.

The following is a copy of the Official Balance Sheet:—

MR. MORGAN'S BALANCE SHEET.

PUBLIC INCOME. — FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1856.				PUBLIC EXPENDITURE. — FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1856.			
(Extracted from the Finance Account, No. 252.)				(Extracted from the Finance Account, No. 252.)			
	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Balances and Bills and Advances repayable from Votes,—				10. Interest and Management of the Public Debt			
1. Outstnding 31st March, 1855	2,619,636	13	11	11. Army	28,112,834	9	2
2. Excise	23,213,797	0	6	12. Navy	17,395,059	0	0
3. Customs	17,632,138	14	4	13. Ordnance	19,654,635	1	5
4. Stamps	7,063,610	1	1	14. Extraordinary War Expenses	10,411,543	13	3
5. Assessed Taxes	1,978,652	5	9		4,300,000	0	0
6. Taxes on Land and Tenements	15,187,925	0	1	CIVIL EXPENDITURE.			
7. Post Office	15,187,925	0	1	15. Collection and Management	24,632,600	17	8
8. Post Office	2,637,200	1	1	16. Public Works and Buildings	765,199	19	1
9. Crown Lands	429,715	1	1	17. Salaries and Expenses of Public Depart- ments	1,464,780	11	10
9. Miscellaneous	1,158,147	19	8	18. Justice	3,043,952	7	11
				19. Education, Science, and Art	897,870	17	5
				20. Diplomatic, Colonial, and Consular	491,477	13	11
				21. Superannuations and Charities	228,053	15	8
				22. Special and Temporary Objects	844,189	8	2
				23. Civil List	896,467	10	0
				24. Annuities and Pensions	340,491	3	6
				25. Interest on Loans, Secret Service, &c. ...	183,860	16	8
				26. Civil Contingencies	45,000	0	0
				27. Building Churches	3,000	0	0
				28. Advances repayable from Votes of Par- liament	1,103,095	19	2
					14,450,029	14	0
Excess of Expenditure over Income				Balances and Bills outstanding 31st March, 1856			
					94,294,041	17	9
					1,671,594	5	1
					£96,965,636	0	10

The public income for the year ended 31st March, 1856, amounted to 70,552,145*l.* 1*s.* 10*d.*, and the public expenditure to 94,224,041*l.* 17*s.* 9*d.* There was, therefore, an excess of expenditure over income amounting to 23,671,896*l.* 15*s.* 11*d.*, although in the official balance sheet the excess is stated at only 22,570,066*l.* 13*s.* 10*d.*, or upwards of a million less. This discrepancy between the Government figures and those of Mr. Morgan will be explained by the clear statement of the latter, and of these two forms the reader can judge for himself which is the more intelligible.

The following statement of receipts is extracted from the Finance Accounts, with a reference to the page, the numbers prefixed corresponding with the figures attached to the items in Mr. Morgan's balance sheet :—

No. 1.—Pages 21 to 24.

CUSTOMS.

	£	s.	d.
Butter	113,205	19	10
Cheese	48,808	6	1
Coffee	587,636	16	3
Corn, Meal, and Flour	353,065	14	5
Currants	119,660	3	4
Figs	23,981	7	11
Gloves of Leather	51,519	14	8
Hops	45,543	12	6
Oranges and Lemons	25,174	4	4
Pepper	97,910	1	6
Raisins	124,066	5	8
Rice	20,741	2	4
Silk Manufactures	284,404	12	7
Spirits	2,472,649	5	3
Sugar and Molasses	5,223,530	2	0
Tallow	57,177	8	11
Tea	5,802,086	2	3
Tobacco and Snuff	5,006,698	12	1
Wine	1,856,120	4	3
Wood and Timber	448,756	7	6
Miscellaneous	347,320	8	4
Carried forward	£23,112,056	12	0

Brought forward . . .	£23,112,056	12	0
Duties collected at the Isle of Man . . .	25,991	6	4
Rent of Legal Quays, Warehouse Rent, &c. . .	80,106	13	11
Proceeds of Goods sold for the Duties, &c. . .	31,314	8	6
Received from the Corporation of Manchester, in repayment of the Customs Establishment at that place	1,108	9	3
Fees received under Merchant Shipping Act, Part 2	3,458	10	1
Proceeds of Sale of old Stores, &c.	9,761	0	5
Total Net	£23,213,797	0	6

No. 2.—Page 26.

EXCISE.

	£	s.	d.
Carriages, Hackney	69,635	19	0
Do. Stage	133,016	6	9
Game Certificates	10,348	5	0
Hops	83,571	17	7
Licences	1,399,673	6	0
Malt	6,676,349	0	7
Paper	1,031,808	0	5
Railways	323,790	14	5
Spirits	7,877,829	10	7
Sugar used by Brewers	3,535	10	10
	£17,609,558	11	2
Law Costs recovered	889	16	8
Fines and Forfeitures	13,748	15	9
Sale of Buildings	5,125	0	0
Sums received from Contributions to the late Excise Corporation Fund	1,349	15	6
Miscellaneous	1,466	15	4
Total Net	£17,632,138	14	4

These figures show that more than one half of the National Income is derived from taxes on commodities, and materials of manufacture; that, amongst these commodities, are to be found many articles now con-

sidered to be amongst the necessities of life ; and that all these are taxes on the conveniences and comforts of the people, and injurious to the productive industry of the country.

It will also be seen that many of these taxes present examples of that system of class legislation which is supposed to have been exploded by the repeal of the Corn Laws ; that they are all unequal in their effects, pressing with the greatest severity on those who are the least able to bear them ; and, therefore, are in direct opposition to the primary rules and maxims of political economy, and in violation of the first principles of justice and humanity.

But, as many persons pretend to despise all rules and maxims of political economy, when reduced to practice—and as many others deny that our present system of taxation is in violation of the principles of justice and humanity—the truth of these assertions is a fit subject for inquiry and proof. For this purpose the following principal articles, paying Customs and Excise Duties ; and the other taxes, falling under this denunciation, shall be separately viewed.

And here is the proof :—

1. CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DUTIES.

TEA.

Customs Duty.—Net produce of Tax for the

Year ended 31st March, 1856 . . . £5,802,086 2 3

It may be convenient, throughout this examination, if the reader will bear in mind, as a text, the following remark of Mr. Porter (generally received as a very high authority) from his work, on “Public Revenue and Expenditure,” page 476 :—“IT HAS ALWAYS EXCITED DISSATISFACTION ON THE PART OF THE PUB-

LIC TO BE CALLED ON FOR THE PAYMENT OF ANY TAX FROM WHICH THEY HAVE NOT THE POWER TO PROTECT THEMSELVES, BY ABSTAINING FROM THE USE OF THE TAXED COMMODITY. IT IS THIS CONSIDERATION WHICH HAS ALWAYS MADE OUR FINANCE MINISTERS PREFER INDIRECT TO DIRECT TAXATION, AND WHICH LED, DURING THE PROGRESS OF A LONG AND EXPENSIVE WAR, TO THE IMPOSITION OF DUTIES THAT WEIGHED WITH DESTRUCTIVE FORCE UPON THE SPRINGS OF INDUSTRY."

To make this text complete, the following should be added:—

"ALL ARTICLES WHICH CONSTITUTE A LARGE AND NECESSARY PORTION OF THE FOOD OF THE COMMUNITY, OR MINISTER TO THE PROFITABLE EMPLOYMENT OF THE PEOPLE, ARE UNFIT OBJECTS OF TAXATION, IN ANY WAY, OR DEGREE."

Without entering into any minute physical, or metaphysical, inquiry into the question, what is, or what is not, a necessary of life, it is sufficient to say that the article TEA is now become, to a very large majority of the working population in this country, one of the necessities of life; and that the population of this country is increasing at the rate of about a thousand per day.

This tax was raised in 1811 to 96 per cent. as a War Tax, and now, owing to the great decrease which has taken place in the price of bonded Tea, it averages no less than 225 per cent., notwithstanding that *the price to the public, duty paid*, is less by 60 per cent. than at that period. Thus, though a War Tax, it is not only continued after a period of 40 years of peace, but *increased* by upwards of 125 per cent!

The *average* cost of tea in bond may be stated, at present, to be about 1s. 5d. per pound.

The *lowest* price of the *lowest* tea now in the market

is 1*s.* 2*d.* per pound, in bond. Of this kind but little ever goes into consumption by itself, and when it does, it is sold at a low price, as a "*leading article*," that is, to attract custom for other more remunerative goods. As such, this tea is now selling retail at 2*s.* 8*d.*, and has been sold even lower; in short, it is sold without profit by the retailer for the purpose before mentioned.

The price paid for tea in bond, say for the 4*s.* canister, varies according to the amount of profit which the retailer may decide upon securing to himself. This is effected in the trade by mixing together teas of various qualities and prices, the duty being the same on all.

The following statement of costs and charges would apply, with as much accuracy as can be obtained, to first class retailers, of whom there are a great number in London, and in the large provincial towns, viz.:—

	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Cost of mixed Teas per Pound, in Bond	1	5
Wholesale Dealers' Charges to cover bad Debts, Interest on advance of Duty, and Profits	0	2
Duty	1	5
Retailers' Profit, and to cover bad Debts	1	0
	<hr/>	
Selling Price, per Pound	4	0

The smaller retailers, by whom, nevertheless, the greater portion of duty-paid tea is sold, obtain a larger profit, to cover their greater risk of bad debts, but do not, in general, buy on such advantageous terms.

The wholesale dealers' profits of 2*d.* per pound are calculated to cover all his expenses, the risk of bad debts, and interest of money, for his advance of the duty; and thus the duty, to the large wholesale dealers who can afford to advance it, becomes a profit. This fact, however, appears not to be generally admitted in the trade, but it is evident that the profits are calcu-

lated to cover this advance, whether so acknowledged or not.

It is difficult, or impossible, to name a per-centage rate of profit for the wholesale dealer, under different heads, to which the trade will agree. The wholesale dealer himself cannot state these precisely. But he must have so much to cover expenses, so much for interest of monies and profits, and so much for the advance of the duty. He lumps all these together, and gets what he can; and this depends entirely on the nature of his business. Some, for instance, who turn their capital very quickly round, and give very short credit, are content with a much smaller per-centage than others who give longer credit. Different parts of the country differ in practice; moreover, a large portion of the tea sold is sold in bond; and though the wholesale dealer takes the trouble of clearing the goods, most of the large retailers remit cash to the wholesale dealer for this purpose, taking credit only on the short price.

The course of the retail trade may be stated as follows:—On a 4*s.* tea the retail dealer gets 1*s.* per pound profit. On lower price teas he gets less. Of this cost, 1*s.* 5*d.* is for duty, advanced to Government by the dealer, at a great cost and risk. It is, therefore, evident that, if there were no duty, this tea, instead of costing the dealer 3*s.*, would cost him only 1*s.* 7*d.* And then, if the dealer charged a profit of 6*d.* instead of 1*s.*, he would do as well for himself as he does now, and even better, considering the saving he would effect. Thus, the reduction of 1*s.* 5*d.* duty would make a deduction of 1*s.* 11*d.* to the consumer, who would thus pay 2*s.* 1*d.* for what he now pays 4*s.* And this, assuming sixty millions' yearly consumption, would save the country the use of five millions of money yearly.

These may be taken, as they are admitted by the

trade to be, in effect, fair statements of the course of the tea trade, and of the legitimate profits of the respectable wholesale and retail dealers.

The practice of mixing teas of inferior quality and lower price with teas of better quality and higher price, appears to be universal in the trade, and is represented to be for the benefit of the public, by the improvement of the quality of the tea for the price paid.

Of the dishonest dealer, who cheats his customers with a damaged, adulterated, or spurious article, it is unnecessary here to say anything.

It is admitted by the trade, that the poor and working classes are by far the best customers of the tea-dealer, and that their purchases are generally of the higher price tea. Thus, it will be seen, that every poor labouring man, or washerwoman, or, still poorer "distressed needlewoman," who spends 3*d.* in tea, pays something more than three half-pence in the shape of tax, and its attendant consequences.

It is difficult to estimate, very accurately, those consequences, for no one can say how much the duty enhances the price to the consumer, beyond the amount actually paid for duty. There is no concurrence of opinion in the trade on this question. But it may be safely assumed that the repeal of the duty would have the effect of lowering the import price.

It cannot be stated as a fact known, but it is believed, that teas of the best qualities are brought down from the tea-growing countries in China to Canton, and there sold for, from 1*d.* to 2*d.* per pound, at a good profit, even in the present barbarous manner of transporting it many hundreds of miles, from the interior of China to Canton, on men's backs; and that the supply which could be so brought down would be sufficient to supply the markets of the world.

The export duty on tea in China is understood to be about $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ per pound. What the tea trade will be when all import duty is removed, and the tea is brought down by railway from the tea-growing districts to Canton, who can say? All that can be said is, that it will be so.

It is only a question of time, and the time will be short, when the people of this country are determined that it shall be so. It seems as if Providence had pointed out the way by trade, for Christianising, enlightening, and ameliorating the condition of mankind; and we may, therefore, hope and believe that those who work lawfully for this object, work in accordance with the Almighty will.

But, at present, we have to do with things as they are, and bad as they are, by excluding from suffering multitudes of human beings one of the precious gifts of Providence, evidently intended for the comfort of all, as shown by the inexhaustible abundance of the gift, all is not yet told. There is to be added to this tax, the cost of collecting it.

An extremely difficult calculation this cost, as will hereafter appear. Nor is this all, as will be hereafter shown; for, to the cost of collection are to be added many other costs and losses, direct and indirect,—some incalculable, but all falling upon the people suffering under the present complicated and oppressive system of Customs and Excise Duties.

These costs and losses, at the lowest calculation, show that the public paid, in the year 1855-6, directly and indirectly, for the tax on tea, 8,703,129*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.*, or 2,901,043*l.* 1*s.* 1*d.*, in addition to 5,802,086*l.* 2*s.* 3*d.*, the produce of this tax paid into the Exchequer.

The rate of duty which, for many years prior to 1853, was 2*s.* $2\frac{1}{4}d.$ per pound, was reduced, from 1st June, 1853, to 1*s.* 10*d.* per pound; and, from 5th

April, 1854, to 1s. 6d. per pound; and, from 21st April, 1855, to 1s. 9d. per pound; and, from 5th April, 1857, to 1s. 5d. per pound.

The quantity of tea imported in the last three years, according to the Custom House returns, was as follows:—

	IMPORTED.			HOME CONSUMPTION.		
	1854.	1855.	1856.	1854.	1855.	1856.
Tea - - lbs.	85,792,082	83,259,687	86,159,517	61,970,341	63,463,394	63,295,727

It thus appears that, of the quantity imported, we retain for home consumption upwards of sixty-three millions of pounds weight yearly, and export to the colonies, and elsewhere, upwards of twenty millions of pounds weight yearly; and that the quantity retained for home consumption allows a little more than two pounds per head per annum on the entire population of the United Kingdom. In some of our colonies the consumption reaches to nine pounds per head per annum, and in Australia, it is said to be as much as fifteen pounds per head per annum.

It is well known that our trade with China is less beneficial to this country, in proportion to the value of our imports, than that carried on with many other countries, and that this arises from the inability of our merchants to find a corresponding market in China for our manufactured goods. If our merchants were able to make their payments for tea with manufactured goods, back freights would be lower, and the profits realised by the out cargo would often enable the merchant to part with his home cargo, tea, at lower rates than at present.

Previously to the Chinese rebellion, and to the late failure of the silk crop, the Chinese were receiving our manufactured goods in full payment for their products.

But, from the official returns of exports and imports, this does not appear to be the case at present; but that, for a considerable portion of their staple commodities, tea and silk, they now receive payment in silver. The reason of this change in the course of our trade with China can only be found in the greater desire evinced by the Chinese, since their civil war, to get hold of bullion, combined with greater competition among our merchants to get hold of their silks, and which induces our merchants to accede more readily to the demands of the Chinese for silver. But these are, probably, only temporary causes, and when these are removed there is every reason to expect that our trade with China would again be carried on as formerly, by barter, or exchange of goods; the Chinese, for reasons best known to themselves, objecting to part with their precious metals; and that they would again be ready to barter, to any extent, their staple commodities in exchange for our manufactured goods. If, therefore, our consumption of tea were only raised to 9 lbs. or 10 lbs. per head per annum, there would be every reason to expect that our trade with China would then be increased four or five fold; and, while our Manchester manufacturers were deriving the benefit of this improved market for their goods, and giving profitable employment to many thousands of now unemployed hands, every poor labouring man, and washerwoman, and needlewoman, in the kingdom might have their quarter of a pound of tea for what they are now paying for an ounce. It is impossible to say beforehand what would be the effect of such a change on the poor-rates throughout the kingdom; but it is easy to see, and quite safe to say, that a very material diminution of poor-rates must be the consequence of such a change, and that the welfare of the people, and the wealth of the nation, must be thereby very greatly increased. In

short, it is quite plain that our present trade with China furnishes no criterion for the trade as it would be under such a change, and that the trade, so conducted, would open an inexhaustible market to British manufactures.

TOBACCO AND SNUFF.

Customs Duty.— Net produce of Tax for the

Year ended 31st March, 1856	£5,006,698 12 1
-----------------------------	-----------------

It was given in evidence, before the Select Committee on the Tobacco Trade, in 1844, that “nine-tenths of the tobacco is consumed by the working classes.” This tax, therefore, presses most heavily upon them. The beneficial or injurious effects of the use of this article is a matter of opinion; but, so long as an *entire class* of our population uses it, to the extent of nine-tenths of a consumption, yielding a yearly revenue of upwards of 5,000,000*l.*, independently of the quantity consumed by them which is never charged with duty, it is reasonable to conclude that, *to them*, it is an article of indispensable necessity, or a greatly coveted luxury; in either of which cases the duty, only a few years ago, upwards of 900 per cent. on the average; and, at the present very high prices, upwards of 400 per cent. on the average, is beyond all defence. But when the amount of this duty is clearly proved to be the *cause* of enormous smuggling, with all its frightful consequences, as any one may be convinced by consulting the evidence given before the above-mentioned Parliamentary Committee, this tax is not only placed beyond all defence, but becomes in itself absolutely criminal, as conducive to crime, and affords a melancholy illustration of the evil effects of our present system of taxation on the social condition of the people.

The whole evidence given before the committee

proves that the prevention of smuggling under the existing high duty is an impossibility; and referring to the opinion of the Commissioners of Excise Inquiry, in 1833-4, they add — “The nature of this temptation is at once apparent from the fact that 100*l.* expended at Flushing in buying tobacco may be followed by the receipt of 1000*l.*, if the tobacco can be landed safely in this country, at Hull or elsewhere.”

Mr. Ayre, Clerk to the Magistrates of Hull, was examined by the Committee of 1848, and stated, “with confidence, from his own observation, that fifteen cases of smuggling escape where one case is detected.” He supports his opinion by eight years’ experience. He added, “There were eighty-five detections in 1843; and, I believe, for every one of those eighty-five there were fifteen who escaped.” He also stated that there are “a class of merchant smugglers who smuggle more than the seamen and officers of ships, although they all smuggle.” He further adds, “I find that all the ports opposite our coast—that is, from Flushing up to Ham-
burgh, and in the Baltic also — *they pack tobacco for the sole purpose of smuggling.* That is the case in every one of those ports; they are all alike. They are compressed into small packages, whereby they can be most easily secreted. Tobacco is also smuggled packed in goods imported to a considerable extent, and there are vessels employed expressly to smuggle tobacco.”

In four years, to 1798, when the duty was only 8*d.* per lb., the quantity of tobacco entered for home consumption in Ireland was 32,000,000 lbs., making an annual average of 8,000,000 lbs.; but in four years to 1829, the quantity imported for home consumption in Ireland was only about 16,000,000 lbs., making an annual average of 4,000,000 lbs., that is, half what it was thirty years previously, when the population was only half as numerous. Had the individual consump-

tion of tobacco that paid duty increased according to the increase of the population of Ireland, the annual consumption in 1829 should have been 16,000,000 lbs. instead of 4,000,000 lbs. This may be taken as a pretty accurate statement of the effect of the high duty at the present time; and as, no doubt, the individual consumption of tobacco has increased in this ratio, the conclusion is, that full three-fourths of the whole consumption are supplied by smuggling, and that more than one-fourth is supplied by adulterations.

It appears by the evidence given in the session 1831, before the Committee on Irish Tobacco, that there would be a considerable exportation of manufactured tobacco to foreign countries but for the restrictions from the high duty. The drawback allowed is accompanied with so many vexatious conditions, that it is not a sufficient compensation to the manufacturer for the original duty paid, and he is, in consequence, obliged to require so high a price as to be unable to meet foreign competition. By 3 & 4 Will. IV., c. 52, a scale is adopted for supplying the navy with tobacco and wine, free of duty, according to rank in the ship.

It seems that numerous committees and commissioners of inquiry have, from time to time, over many years, recommended a reduction of duties to prevent smuggling; and no Chancellor of the Exchequer, nor other statesman, has controverted the committees and commissioners on principle, but all have demanded to know whence they were to draw a sufficient revenue if such reductions as would destroy smuggling were effected. The only true answer is,—the abolition of all customs and excise, and the substitution of direct taxation.

The following statement of prices of tobacco, and a statement of the rates of duty charged, and the per centage of these duties to the prime cost of the article, sufficiently explain the temptation to smuggle.

PRICES OF VIRGINIA AND KENTUCKY TOBACCO, 1ST JUNE, 1844.—
LONDON: THE DUTY CHARGED, AND THE RATE PER CENT. ON
PRIME COST.

Kinds of Tobacco.	Average Price in Bond.	Duty 3s. 1d. $\frac{1}{2}$ ths equal to
Virginia Leaf . . .	3½d. per lb.	1,100 per cent.
Do. Strips . . .	5½d. „ .	700 „
Kentucky Leaf . . .	3½d. „ .	1,200 „
Do. Strips . . .	4½d. „ .	800 „

These calculations are made on the average prices in bond in June, 1844, but the average prices in bond have since very much increased, and are now, May, 1857, on the average, about two-thirds more, and the per centage of duties is consequently diminished in proportion.

There is a variety of other tobacco, varying in price from 1s. to 5s. per lb. in bond, principally used for cigars; therefore, taking the average price at 3s. per lb., the duty of 3s. 1d., $\frac{1}{2}$ ths, on tobacco used for cigars is only equal to about 100 per cent. on the prime cost. The duty on all the foreign manufactured tobacco, whether cigars, Cavendish, or negro-head, is 9s., and the addition of 5s. per lb.

Average Price in Bond.	Duty 9s. and 5 per cent., equal to
Havannah Cigars . . 8s. per lb.	112 per cent.
Manilla Cheroots . . 6s. „	150 per cent.
East India Cheroots . 1s. „	900 „
Negro-head and Cavendish 6d. „	1,800 „

Tobacco stalks, produced from duty-paid leaf, are sold generally by the tobacco-cutters to the snuff-makers at 3s. to 3s. 2d. per pound. The importation of tobacco stalks is prohibited; but as they can be purchased in Holland at 1d. per pound, the temptation to smuggle them into this country is equal to 3,800 per cent.

It is, therefore, apparent that a correct estimate of

the public loss by the tobacco duty is unattainable; but, allowing only fifty per cent. for the cost of collection and all the other indirect costs, charges, and losses, and the result is that the public paid last year, directly and indirectly, for the tax on tobacco 7,510,047*l.* 18*s.* 1*d.*, or 2,503,349*l.* 6*s.*, in addition to 5,006,698*l.* 12*s.* 1*d.*, the produce of this tax paid into the Exchequer.

The quantities of tobacco imported in the last three years, according to the Customs' Returns, were as follows:—

TOBACCO.	IMPORTED.			HOME CONSUMPTION.		
	1854.	1855.	1856.	1854.	1855.	1856.
Stemmed . lbs.	16,389,520	15,340,940	13,279,122	17,030,637	15,743,405	15,618,478
Unstemmed „	16,103,328	21,479,906	31,509,008	13,306,403	14,531,696	16,711,263
Manufactured and Snuff „	2,709,873	2,651,544	1,855,104	206,495	218,586	249,256

So far as the Customs' Returns afford the means of making such an estimate, the quantity of tobacco now consumed per head of population is not more than at the commencement of the present century. According to the best computations which have been made, if all the tobacco entered for home consumption had been divided equally among the population, it would have amounted—in 1801 to about 16 ounces per head per annum; in 1811 to 18½ oz.; in 1821 to 11½ oz.; in 1831 to 12¾ oz.; in 1841 to 13½ oz.; and in 1851 to 16 oz.

The quantity of pounds weight consumed annually, at the present time (1856), it will be seen is a little more than one lb. per head per annum on the population of the United Kingdom. It thus appears that not less than 6,000,000*l.* annually is paid in retail for tobacco in the United Kingdom, and that, of this immense sum for such an article, three-fourths are paid in the form of duty.

Five-sixths of all our tobacco is brought from the

United States—a ratio of dependence nearly as complete as that in cotton. As an illustration of the small quantity of coffee consumed in Ireland a few years ago, it was stated that the Irish got rid of four times as much tobacco as coffee. We, nevertheless, occupy a very humble position as smokers; for Mr. Crawford, in an Essay in the Statistical Society's Journal, states that the United Kingdom consumes less than most other European nations per head; that Europe takes less than the other quarters of the globe; that France consumes 18 ounces, Denmark 70 oz., and Belgium so high as 73 oz. per head annually; that this latter is far above the European average, but far below the Asiatic average, and that it may, possibly, be a fair average for the whole world. In short, he thinks that 1,000 millions of people may take 70 oz. each per year, making a total annual consumption of tobacco amounting to two millions of tons! He further supposes that the average price all over the world may not exceed 2d. per lb., which would give a total retail expenditure for tobacco of thirty-six millions sterling per annum, mostly driven off in smoke. The average wholesale price of tobacco in England is about 4½d. per lb.

Of the extent to which adulteration is carried in consequence of the enormous duty imposed on tobacco in the United Kingdom, it is impossible to form any estimate; but it is supposed that the quantities of adulterated and smuggled tobacco together, exceed annually the whole amount on which duty is paid.

As the payment of this enormous duty is strictly enforced on all tobacco brought into the Custom House, whether damaged, or not, and as almost every hogshead of tobacco becomes more or less injured by the voyage to England, and as the importer takes care not to pay the duty on any but saleable portions, and as the absolute destruction of that which escapes the duty, is

the imperative condition on which the importer is so far absolved from his liability, the consequence is, an enormous destruction of *damaged* tobacco in the "kiln," or, as it is familiarly called, "the Queen's tobacco pipe," erected for the purpose near the vast tobacco warehouses, at the London Docks. Such is the operation of our Customs' Duties on tobacco.

MALT.

Excise Duty.—Net produce of Tax for the

Year ended 31st March, 1856 . . . £6,676,340 0 7

This tax of 2*s.* 7*d.* per bushel on English barley malt, and 2*s.* per bushel on Scotch, presses with peculiar hardship on the working labourers, and on the poor; and is attended with the incalculable mischief of encouraging them to resort to the use of ardent spirits,—by greatly increasing the price, and thereby depriving many of the use, of the more wholesome beverage, beer, which may be, and ought to be regarded, at least, to the working labourer, as a necessary of life.

The Commissioners of Excise Inquiry, in their report say, in reference to this tax:—"The repeal of it would produce scarcely any other effect than that of raising the price of barley, and affording to farmers the means of paying higher rent for barley land." If, the farmer, out of his increased price for barley, could afford to pay a higher price for land, it is a legitimate benefit which the landlord has a right to expect; but, as the barley would not be raised in price beyond what the public could afford and were willing to give, and who, it cannot be supposed would give up to the farmer the whole benefit of the repeal, any more than they would expect to keep all the benefit to themselves, its repeal would benefit all parties—the consumers of beer, the producers of malt, and the owners of the land.

That this tax is ultimately paid by the consumer, is a fact which cannot be successfully controverted, though it has been frequently denied. The consumer, therefore, would have the full benefit of the repeal of this tax. The greatest objection, however, is the manner in which it interferes with, and restricts, an important branch of home manufacture, not only preventing any improvement in the making of malt, but actually creating impediments, at times and seasons of the year, to making it at all. Moreover, it throws this branch of manufacture, most injuriously, into the hands of, comparatively, a few persons; and lessens, to an incalculable extent, the employment of the people, especially in agricultural districts, producing deprivation and misery to an extent also incalculable. If malt and hops were duty free, every labourer and mechanic would be at liberty to malt his own barley, and brew his own beer unadulterated, and then we should have no more of "the Brewers' Monopoly."

It is worthy of remark, as one of the effects of these fiscal regulations, that the falling off in the consumption of malt between the years 1730 and 1831, is one half. The population of England and Wales being in the former year, 5,687,993, and the consumption of malt 28,410,421 bushels; and in the latter, with a population of 13,894,574, the consumption of malt did not exceed 32,963,470 bushels, showing a consumption of about five bushels per head in 1730, and only two and a half a century later; the duty in 1730 being only one-fifth of that levied in 1831.

The process of malting is in itself perfectly simple, and not more mysterious than the making of tea in a tea-pot. It consists in wetting the grain (barley is chiefly used) till it begins to sprout, and then checking the vegetable process suddenly by heat. This produces a saccharine substance in the grain, which is the essence

of malt. Pale malt is made by a low heat, and brown malt by a strong heat. The pale *should* be used for ale, and the brown *should* be used for porter. But their use is not now as it should be. The high duties directed the brewers to the study of their malt; how to make the most of the least possible quantity. The brown malt, more wholesome as a tonic, and agreeable to the taste, had become the general favourite of the public, when the brewers found that a greater quantity of wort of a certain strength could be produced from pale than from brown malt. Brown was, therefore, disused in the brewing of porter, or strong beer. The wort was now pale, and the agreeable bitter taste and flavour had to be supplied from the laboratory, or druggist's store-house, instead of the malt-kiln. Quassia, cocculus indicus, opium, &c., were used.

Since the repeal of the beer duties the restrictions on brewers are simplified. They now consist of a licence to brew, entering the premises at the Excise office, and in being forbidden the use of any article other than malt, hops, and water.

A brewer, using any place or mash-tun for the purpose of brewing, without having made an entry thereof at the nearest Excise office, forfeits for every such offence, 200*l.*; and all the worts, beer, and materials for making the same, together with the mash-tun, are forfeited, and may be seized by any officer.

Every druggist, vendor, dealer, chemist, or *other person* selling molasses, opium, vitriol, &c., or any colouring matter, to any licensed brewer, or licensed retailer of beer, is liable to have his stock of goods seized, and forfeited, and to be fined 500*l.*

This clause of the law is powerless by its absurdity. Its attempted protection of the malt tax is a licence to evade it, and for the brewer and retailer to adulterate beer without hindrance. Who is to hinder the chemist,

or druggist, or drysalter, or "other person" — the grocer, for instance — from selling "molasses," or "other colouring matter," to any one that asks to have that article? The Excise officers see this law broken every day; but though an offender may occasionally be convicted, they can, in general, only turn their backs on the poisoned beer, and the poison dealers, and walk away. If anything can fulfil the object of this enactment, it must be the freedom to use honest malt, at its natural price, free of duty.

The brewer is also prohibited from having in his brewery, or on any part of his premises, or in any mill connected with such brewery, any raw or unmalted corn, or grain (horse provender included); and all unmalted corn, or grain, which shall be found in such brewing premises, or mill, and all malted corn, or grain, with which such unmalted corn, or grain, may have been mixed, shall be forfeited, and may be seized by any officer, together with all vessels, or packages, in which such raw or unmalted corn, or grain, with which the same may have been mixed, shall be contained; and every brewer shall, for every such offence, forfeit 200*l*.

The merchants, or dealers, and their clerks, or agents, engaged in the export of beer, are required to make oath before the "proper Excise officers," that to the best of their belief, such ale, or beer, has been made *wholly* from malt which has been charged with, and paid, the duty of 2*s*. 7*d*. a bushel (though it be notorious that such liquors have *not* been made wholly from malt). They must also testify in such oath that the quantity of malt used was not less than two bushels, imperial measure, for every barrel (thirty-six gallons) of such beer or ale. And the oaths must include a statement of the place where, and the person or persons by whom, the liquor was brewed; whether the brewer

was licensed, and had his premises entered by the Excise; also that none of the ale or beer is entered for the use of the ship's crew, or passengers. This swearing completed, the debenture entitling the exporter to a drawback of *5s.* per barrel, or *7s. 6d.*, according to its strength, may be paid. The intention of this enactment is to make a re-payment out of the public treasury to the persons interested in the produce, and the rent, of barley-growing land. It is a question whether this encourages the growth of barley at all, but it is beyond question that it encourages the practice of doubtful swearing.

The enactments regulating this simplest of manufactures, the making of malt, are about *forty* in number, and are exceedingly complex. These are embodied in the general Act of 7 and 8 Geo. IV.; but that is also exceedingly complex. It contains *eighty-three* clauses, with a *hundred and six* penalties, amounting in the whole to 13,000*l.*

Almost everything offensive to common sense in the former Acts was retained in this. It was found to be impracticable, and accordingly another Act was passed to mend it. Some of the vexatious regulations are repealed, also several of the penalties; still they are severe, and a satire upon the Government of a nation called—and, in some respects, entitled to be called—the freest on the face of the earth.

The maltster must first be licensed to make malt, and must enter his premises at the Excise office, and use no other for any part of his work, no matter what sudden demand for his products may arise. The licence must be renewed annually; but the possession of a licence does not entitle him to take a single step in the way of his business. Before beginning to construct, use, or alter his cisterns, couches, frames, kilns, or utensils of any sort, he must give a written notice to

the exciseman. Nor is it enough that the Excise officer is duly informed of all his plans; the form and size of the implements and utensils are fixed by law. Though he were to discover that he might either expedite his business, or improve the quality of his malt, by making an alteration in his machinery, he is prohibited from doing so. However ill-contrived the implements to be used may be, the maltster dare neither change nor amend them. Nor, when the cisterns and utensils are constructed according to law, can he use them when, and as, he thinks proper. Before beginning work he must give twenty-four hours' notice to the Excise officer; and though the Excise officer be duly informed of an intention to make malt, and be present, no grain must be put into the cistern to be wetted, except during certain hours of the day, not judged by the requirements of each case, but fixed by Act of Parliament. Nor must the grain remain in the cistern over fifty-five hours, else the maltster is liable to a penalty of 100*l.*, *unless he intimate to the officer before wetting it*, that he intends it to be steeped sixty-five hours instead of fifty-five hours. Should he give this notice, and observe during the period that the grain is being steeped too long, he must neither take it out, nor draw off part of the water. Having given notice of fifty-five, or sixty-five hours to the Excise officer, the grain must, at all hazards, remain immersed that exact period of time, or he must choose to incur heavy penalties, or choose the alternative—bribe the Excise officer to break his oath. What a fearful mingling of the solemn and absurd!

Though the maltster cannot withdraw his grain from the cistern until it has lain the exact number of hours notified to the exciseman before it was wetted, under a penalty of 100*l.*, he may change the water in which the grain is immersed; but he must previously inti-

mate his intention of doing so to the officer, specifying the hour when he intends to draw off the water, taking care that it shall be between 8 A.M. to 2 P.M., on condition, however, that the grain be again completely covered with water within an hour from the period when the previous water was begun to be drawn off.

If the Excise officer think the grain is more dense in the cistern than the density enacted by the Legislature, he may measure it; and if it exceed one-twentieth part the density allowed by law, the maltster shall, for every such offence, *or accident* (unless he palter with the solemn oath), pay the penalty of 100*l*.

If the maltster shall use more than one cistern, it is enacted that, "he shall empty, or take all such corn or grain from and out of all such cisterns *at one and the same time*." If he should empty one cistern before he begins to empty another, by mistake of negligent workmen, or otherwise, he will (provided the Exciseman's oath stand good) be visited by a heavy fine. When one cistern, or a number of them, have been emptied, no more cisterns can be emptied in the same place until after a period of four days has elapsed. A heavy penalty also enforces this rule.

The grain being, at length, got out of the cistern, must be deposited in *couch-frames* in a particular way, and must remain in them for a certain fixed period; and it is enacted, that if the malt, when laid in the couch-frames, shall be in any way more than thirty inches deep, a penalty of 100*l*. shall be inflicted. Expensive suits-at-law, occasioned by unsuccessful appeals against Excise informations and magisterial convictions, were recently tried in the West of England. The appeals were unsuccessful. Some of the maltsters were ruined, though proof was given that accidents *might* have caused the variations in the depth

of malt in the couch-frames. The accustomed officers of the districts, Oxfordshire, Wilts, Dorset, and other parts not named, were supposed to have long connived at fraudulent practices. New officers were sent to supersede them, who, like new brooms, swept clean while *they were new*.

If the malt require sprinkling, as nearly all that is made in England does, according to the quality of the soil in which the barley is grown, and the kind of barley, it must not be sprinkled, under heavy penalties, until it has lain a fixed number of days. Yet in that time the malt may have become mouldy for the want of sprinkling, according to the quality of the barley, and be less or more deteriorated. The various regulations as to sprinkling, and the penalties attached, are too complex to be related here, and a further abstract would be unintelligible.

The maltster must keep a barley-book, at all times accessible to the Excise officer, or incur a heavy penalty, in which must be entered all the barley he buys, the names, surnames, and residences of those from whom he bought it; and containing also a detailed account of all the malt he makes, the names and addresses of the individuals to whom it has been sold, the quantities disposed of to each, with a notification of the hour, as well as the day, when each transaction took place. The Excise officers may enter the maltster's premises by night, or by day, according as they may suspect fraud, or be disposed to cause annoyance.

Notwithstanding all these, and numberless other inconveniences, penalties, and absurdities, causing many most respectable persons, and much capital, to be driven from the trade; and causing fraud and corruption to pervade all its departments, until the business of malting is infected with all those abuses which inevitably beset every business conducted on fictitious and con-

tradiictory principles; notwithstanding all these accumulating ills upon the maltsters, the greater part of them are the earnest advocates of the malt tax. They would willingly be relieved from the stringent regulations and the penalties; but they apprehend, with good reason, that if the malting trade were free, the simplicity of the manufacture would attract numerous small capitalists, such as farmers, who would malt their own barley, and thus destroy the strict monopoly which the Excise laws now give to the maltsters. Like all other monopolies, the cost of this falls upon the public. As a necessary consequence of this complicated system, the importation of malt is prohibited.

In round numbers, the malt consumed in the United Kingdom, by private families, as well as by public brewers, is 40,000,000 bushels, or 5,000,000 quarters annually, with which about 15,000,000 barrels of ale and beer are brewed, equal to 540,000,000 gallons; or, about twenty gallons per head per annum, divided among the population of the United Kingdom. At the average estimate of 50s. per barrel, the value amounts to nearly 40,000,000*l.* annually.

The following are the Excise returns for malt for the three last years :—

MALT.	IMPORTED.			HOME CONSUMPTION.		
	1854.	1855.	1856.	1854.	1855.	1856.
England . bush.	31,869,127	30,199,489	34,439,474	31,863,739	30,195,233	34,429,860
Scotland . "	3,412,950	2,370,715	1,062,462	3,411,511	2,369,743	1,062,462
Ireland . "	1,537,477	1,317,030	1,478,105	1,537,477	1,317,030	1,478,105
United Kingdom	36,819,554	33,887,234	36,980,041	36,812,727	33,882,006	36,970,427

HOPS.

Customs' Duty	£45,543 12 0
Excise Duty	83,571 17 7
Net produce of Tax for the Year ended } 31st March, 1856	£129,115 9 7

Foreign hops are, practically, almost prohibited for the protection of the English hop-growers, by a duty of 2*l.* 5*s.* per cwt.; and British grown, on re-importation, are deemed foreign. The Excise duty on English grown is 18*s.* 8*d.* per cwt. This duty is levied on hops irrespective of quality. In some years, and in some districts in all years, the hop produce is so defective as to make the duty a burden to be paid out of capital, not out of profit.

The hop grower, like every other person subject to the Excise laws, is pestered with the revenue officers, who regulate the number, and place, of the hop plantations. These cost from 70*l.* to 100*l.* per acre, and do not always pay the expenses of labour.

The Excisemen watch the pickers of the hops, the kilns where they are dried, and forbid them to be dried elsewhere than in certain kilns, though the hops should be destroyed in consequence. Indeed, that would not affect the duty, as it would be levied though the hops went to the dunghill. The packing is also supervised by the Excise, and the bags, or *pockets*, stamped with their marks.

Under the vicissitudes of the weather, and the fly—the latter an insect pest in the hop grounds, more detrimental than any other pest, except the Exciseman—the grounds planted have gradually decreased within the last thirty years. Within a hundred years the hops used in a given quantity of brewers' wort have been diminished by one-half. The wholesomeness of the beer

has declined with the decrease of the hops; firstly, because the hop itself is a wholesome tonic; and secondly, because its place has been supplied in beer by the use of drugs unwholesome, or positively deleterious.

As with malt, the only remedy is the removal of the Excise and Customs' duties on hops, leaving the genuine article to be freely grown, freely imported, and freely used.

This, as a tax on the beverage of the poorest and hardest worked portion of the community, ought, *therefore*, to be repealed. It is, however, as in the case of the malt duty, injurious also to the owners and occupiers of certain lands, and, in consequence, to agricultural labourers.

The effect of the duty on hops is also to produce this anomalous consequence,—that two successive seasons of heavy growth is generally followed by the failure of many of the hop-growers; while the failure of the crop is their success. A failure of the crop relieves the grower from the claims for duty which a heavy crop would involve; and, creating a scarcity, rapidly runs up, by a natural sequence, the price of the article. But a season or two of heavy growth, like the two last seasons—one of unparalleled abundance—brings a pressure of duty, as at this present time, which brings most of the hop-growers to their wits' end, and many of them quite to the end of their capital, for meeting the Government demand. Having during last year paid for duty about 800,000*l.* for the crop of 1855, and prices having, owing to so enormous a crop, and to the subsequent large growth of 1856, fallen to an extremely low range, the hop-growers now find themselves in no condition to meet the claims which the Excise will, in a few weeks, make upon them in respect of the first moiety of the duty on last Autumn's crop, and they are, therefore, now about to present themselves before the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in Downing Street, as suitors, *in forma*

pauperis, for “time”—to pray for a postponement of the May instalment of duty.

To such absurd anomalies does this system of taxation lead!

The following are the Excise returns for hops, for the three last years :—

Hops.	DUTY PAID.			HOME CONSUMPTION.		
	1854.	1855.	1856.	1854.	1855.	1856.
England, lbs.	9,677,126	83,221,004	55,838,624	9,394,292	82,268,806	54,206,790

In these three years no hops were grown in Ireland, and in Scotland only 4,607 lbs., all which were exported to foreign parts.

WINE.

Customs' Duty.—Net produce of Tax for the

Year ended 31st March, 1857 . . . £1,856,120 4 3

The wine duties are 5*s.* 9*d.* per gallon on foreign, and 2*s.* 10½*d.* on colonial wines.

In 1703, the ruin of this trade was completed, by making permanent the treaty with Portugal, which, from the name of the British minister, was called the Methuen treaty. By this, England bound herself to charge a duty upon French wines 50 per cent. higher than upon those of Portugal, the Portuguese, by way of compensation, binding themselves to admit our woollens into their markets in preference to those of other countries, at a fixed and invariable rate of duty.

By binding ourselves to receive Portuguese wines for two-thirds of the duty payable on those of France, we, in effect, gave the Portuguese growers a monopoly of the British market, by which they became careless of the quality of their wines. They gave a monopoly to the Oporto Wine Company, which fixed the price at

which all wines should be sold. Thus we not only excluded one of the principal equivalents the French had to offer for our commodities, and proclaimed to the world that we considered it better to deal with *two* millions of poor customers, than with *thirty* millions of rich ones, but we also provoked the retaliation of the French, who forthwith excluded most of our articles from their markets. This is, perhaps, the most striking instance in the history of commerce, of Customs' duties diverting trade into new channels, and altering the taste of a people, all but the wealthiest classes having been compelled for a long series of years, either to renounce wine, or to use port.

Another consequence is, that about *a third* of all the Portuguese and Spanish wine, sold in London as genuine, is a liquor wholly manufactured in this country, or in the Channel Islands; and that a large proportion of all the rest is more or less adulterated with substances more or less deleterious. And as no abatement of the duty is made on account of damage, it follows, as a consequence, that all damaged wine is used for adulteration.

The duties, as now levied, without respect to quality, are *ten per cent.* on the best kinds, which only the richest classes in this country can afford; and *twelve hundred per cent.* upon the inferior kinds, which are used by the working people of France, and which might be largely and beneficially brought into this country from France, as a light, refreshing beverage for our workpeople, and as a substitute for liquors less wholesome, and more intoxicating.

The principal wines now used in this country are Port, Sherry, Champagne, Madeira, Hock, Marsala, Cape, &c. The latter are thus treated by Mr. M'Culloch, in his Commercial Dictionary:—

“Most of the Cape wines brought to England have

an earthy, disagreeable taste; are often acid, want flavour and aroma, and are, in fact, altogether execrable. And yet this vile trash, being the produce of a British possession, enjoys peculiar advantages in our markets; for while the duty on Cape is only 2s. 10½d. per gallon, that on all other wines is 5s. 9d. The consequences of this unjust preference are doubly mischievous. In the first place, it forces the importation of an article of which little is directly consumed, but which is extensively employed as a convenient menstruum for adulterating and degrading Sherry, Madeira, and other good wines. And, in the second place, it prevents the improvement of the wine; for while the Legislature thinks fit to give a bounty on the importation of so inferior an article, is it to be supposed that the colonists should exert themselves to produce anything better? It is not easy to imagine a more preposterous and absurd regulation. The act enforcing it ought to be entitled An Act for the adulteration of Wines in Great Britain, and for encouraging the growth of bad Wine in the Cape Colony."

Of the extent of adulteration practised on wine in this country, the public, probably, have but a very faint conception.

From an official return in 1835, it appears that 210 pipes of port wine had been imported into the Channel Islands, from Portugal, in the eight years ending 1833; while, in the same period, 2,072 pipes of port had been imported from the Channel Islands into London.

For the deleterious, and, in many cases, poisonous quality of the ingredients used, the numerous works treating on this part of the subject must be referred to.

These fraudulent practices have been so long in operation, and in such general use that, probably, they would not cease with the abolition of the wine duties. But as they are in a great part the result of the duties,

it may be reasonably expected that a more genuine article, obtained at the same or a lower price than that of the fraudulent and poisonous wine, would be preferred; and this would be found in the market in the absence of the Customs' duties.

It is well known that, in prolific vintages in France, innumerable tons of grapes are left to rot on the ground for want of gathering, the owners not having casks for storing the wines. No doubt, casks would be provided, and this waste would be avoided, if England, by high duties, did not prevent the cheap wines of France from being introduced into this market, and the English people would be refreshed with these wholesome, pleasant, and cheap beverages, instead of the expensive and deleterious compounds now supplied; and, what is still more important, our workmen in the manufacturing districts would be employed in making goods to send in return for the large import of wine from France; and the capital now employed in paying taxes, and the unprofitable retinue of public and private servants now engaged in working out the present system, would be employed in profitable production. In short, the abolition of these duties, would enlarge profitable industry, improve morals, and protect public health. There is a great deal of excellent wine made in Provence and Languedoc, well adapted to the English taste generally, which, if free of duty, could be sold, with a good profit to the importer, for less than sixpence a bottle.

Old sherry, as well as old wine of any other kind, is better than that more recently made; and, therefore, at Xeres, the head quarters of the sherry trade, the birthdays of the respective vintages, so to speak, are well recorded. The vast cellars contain wine of all ages from one year to fifty. The casks of very old wine are never emptied; only a little is drawn out to mix with a larger bulk of newer wine; and the defi-

ciency is immediately made up from casks of the next succeeding year's vintage. A cask of good sherry, as brought to England, may contain portions of twenty or thirty vintages; indeed, it is stated, that under no circumstances is the very old sherry sold without admixture with vintages of later date.

Port wine, as is generally known at the present day, is not port wine, but a mixture of many things with a wine which may, or may not, have come from Portugal. At Oporto the wine manufacturers are said to mix elder juice, apple juice, sloe juice, logwood decoction, and many other liquids with port wine, to accommodate it to the purses of their respective customers. The real wine of the Douro scarcely reaches England at all, and foreigners are astonished that we still continue to purchase an adulterated substitute. Nor do the Spaniards tamper less with our sherry than the Portuguese with our port. Both nations consider that the English taste for wine is vitiated, and, moreover, that we are easily victimised on this subject. It was stated before the Committee on the Wine Duties in 1852, by W. Forrester, an extensive wine-grower in Portugal, that no port is brought to England with less brandy in it than three gallons to a pipe of 115 gallons; that the ratio varies from this minimum of three, up to a maximum of seventeen gallons; and that if it contained no brandy, or less than three gallons to a pipe, the English would not purchase it. In so far as concerns brandy, the wine-growers and merchants of Oporto and Xeres are, perhaps, excusable in yielding to vitiated English taste; but when elder juice, sloe juice, and logwood decoction are introduced into port, to dye the wine, and other ingredients as substitutes for the wine itself, the temptation to dishonesty becomes great. A pipe of port wine rises remarkably in value during its suc

cessive stages ; its value varies from 5*l.* to 17*l.* when in the grower's hands ; this 17*l.* becomes 27*l.* at Oporto ; after which are added the English charges.

Of all the wine made in Europe, the quantity of which can hardly be estimated, there is supposed to be about sixty millions of gallons exported annually from wine-producing countries to other countries. We in England obtain a very humble portion of this. The Committee gave a table of the quantity of wine imported into the United Kingdom for a period of about ninety years—from 1697 to 1785—a table remarkable as exhibiting the almost stationary nature of the wine-trade during a period when most other departments of commerce advanced rapidly ; the quantity never varied far from 2,000,000 to 3,000,000 gallons annually. Another table exhibited the imports from 1786 to 1851, a period of sixty-six years, both inclusive ; the quantity varied from 4,000,000 to 11,000,000 gallons. The Portuguese wines maintained an ascendancy over Spanish until about the year 1830, since which time the balance has been rather the other way. During the last quarter of a century, the quantity entered for home consumption, as distinguished from the quantity imported, has never varied far from the average of the whole, which is about six and a quarter millions of gallons. Cape wines, almost the only wine brought from our own colonies, began to figure in the Customs' books about the beginning of the present century. During the last few years, Marsala, a Sicilian wine, has been growing in favour in England ; it is better than Cape, and cheaper than sherry, or Madeira, and has a flavour somewhat resembling that of sherry.

The average quantities of the different kinds of wine brought to England annually for the last quarter of a century (1830 to 1854), are about as follows :—

	Gallons.
Spanish	3,300,000
Portuguese	3,000,000
French	500,000
Cape	400,000
Madeira	230,000
Canary	220,000
Rhenish	70,000
All other	480,000
	<u>8,200,000</u>

These are the total quantities imported, the proportion retained for home use being about three-fourths.

The quantities of wine imported in the last three years, according to the Customs' returns, were as follows :—

WINE.	IMPORTED.			HOME CONSUMPTION.		
	1854.	1855.	1856.	1854.	1855.	1856.
Red . . gall.	5,217,754	3,890,445	4,157,972	3,427,164	3,046,951	3,365,346
White . . „	5,658,101	5,056,321	5,316,732	3,732,448	3,632,843	4,000,254
Total . . „	10,875,855	8,946,766	9,474,694	7,149,612	6,669,794	7,365,500

The “home consumption” appears to be nearly equal throughout these three years, being about seven millions of gallons annually, the red and white being in about equal quantity.

Some of these concluding observations about the wine trade are abridged from “Dodd's Food of London.”

WOOD AND TIMBER.

Customs' Duty.—Net produce of Tax for the
 Year ended 31st March, 1856 . . . £448,756 7 6

This is a tax on a most important raw material, especially for ship-building and house-building purposes; in the one case increasing the cost of the dwellings of all classes—of the poor especially, and in the other, adding to our difficulties in competing with foreigners in trade. In both instances it affects injuriously the employment of the working classes, and indirectly, as well as directly, their social condition. If there be one article more than another of which it is important that a manufacturing nation like Great Britain, with a great warlike and mercantile navy, should have a large supply of the best quality, and at the lowest price, that article is timber. Without good and cheap timber we cannot have good and cheap ships, houses, and machinery, and yet we burden this indispensable article with a heavy duty, and force the employment of dear and bad timber by a nominal duty; for, in 1842, when the duties on Baltic timber were reduced to 24*s.* and 30*s.* a load, those on Canadian timber were reduced to 1*s.*! If timber be a fit subject for taxation, it is impossible to justify the repeal of the duty on the worst species of timber, and to retain the duty on the best. This distinction and preference is so very absurd that it would seem to be a matter of State policy to inoculate our ships and houses with dry rot.

The tax on timber could not have answered its purpose more completely had it been specially designed (since the repeal of the navigation and registry laws) to give the foreign mechanic a bounty *against* our own. Indeed, the duty is designed to prevent us from obtain-

ing timber from the nearest neighbouring nations, that we may be compelled to take that of an inferior quality from a more distant colony, that colony, in turn, costing us an expensive military and civil service, that we may retain it for the benefit of using its timber! There is in this a combination of injustice and folly deserving of the severest censure.

Moreover, the timber tax is vexatiously capricious. Builders must pay duty, or use bad wood, but cabinet-makers import the choicest woods without let or hindrance. Ship-builders are less favoured. Teak, cedar, and mahogany they may use, duty free; but the fine Italian oak, Government, apparently, wish to retain a monopoly of for the dockyards, where it is used abundantly. In like manner the private ship-builder is denied the use of American pitch-pine planks, Dantzic deals, Riga and Norwegian masts and spars, unless on payment of a tax, adding most seriously to their cost; while tree nails have been selected to show what parliamentary wisdom can accomplish when fully exerted. Two parcels of this article were imported in the same ship from the same country. They were hardly to be distinguished by an unpractised eye, yet one was taxed *thirty per cent. or thereabouts*; the other, the better and more valuable, was admitted *free*! Coopers have their staves duty free, provided they do not exceed *seventy-two inches* in length. But one inch more and the duty is *twenty per cent. upon the value*.

But to detail all the vexatious and absurd inconsistencies of the Customs and Excise laws and regulations would require a book of much larger dimensions than this; and, when all brought together, would appear incredible even to the makers. The wonder is how such a complicated mass of absurdity and inconsistency should ever be brought into practice, and still more wonderful that it should have been so long endured,

especially when it is remembered that inadvertence and forgetfulness are not considered sufficient reasons to induce a revision of the penalties.

Under the tariff of 1846, varieties of duties are added, or continued, on different sizes of the same kind, as well as on different kinds of timber. Some sizes of the same kind are admitted free of duty, while others are charged upon a graduated scale. This is particularly objectionable; the smallest quantities of taxed sizes, on board a vessel, render the supervision and delay of the remainder of a duty-free cargo a necessity. Mistakes, losses, and fraud, are inseparable; and those duties heaviest in amount, graduated in scale, and most vexatious in their operation, apply to timbers for the building and rigging of ships. At all times shipowners have been placed at a disadvantage by the duty on timber; but now that they no longer hold a monopoly, this disadvantage is such as to make the oppressive and impolitic taxes on the materials of ship-building unendurable.

The injurious effects of the timber duties in leading the builder and house owner to use bad timber, and too little of it, are set forth at great length in the evidence of the numerous timber merchants, builders, and others connected with the trade, examined before the Import Duties' Committee.

The present duties on timber or wood, not being deals, battens, boards, staves, handspikes, oars, lath-wood, or other timber or wood, sawn, split, or otherwise dressed (except hewn), and not being otherwise charged with duty, are 7*s.* 6*d.* per load of 50 cubic feet. And of and from British possessions 1*s.* per load of 50 cubic feet; with 5 per cent. additional duty. And deals, battens, boards, or other timber or wood, sawn, or split, foreign, and not otherwise charged with duty, 10*s.* per load of 50 cubic feet. And of and from British posses-

sions, 2*s.* per load of 50 cubic feet ; with 5 per cent. additional duty. And a long and complex schedule of rates per piece, or 100, on deals, handspikes, oars, &c.

The quantities of timber and wood imported in the last three years, according to the official returns, were as follows :—

TIMBER.	IMPORTED.			HOME CONSUMPTION.		
	1854.	1855.	1856.	1854.	1855.	1856.
Deals, Battens, Boards, or other Split Timber, or Wood sawn or split :—						
Of British Possessions . loads	742,059	500,501	649,138	745,786	503,420	648,234
Foreign " "	520,402	434,078	707,738	582,666	478,044	570,919
Timber, or Wood, not being Articles sawn or split, or otherwise dressed, except hewn, and not otherwise charged with Duty :—						
Of British Possessions . loads	692,237	457,800	574,110	697,755	460,293	566,371
Foreign " "	523,972	450,714	509,777	593,924	454,705	496,320

SPIRITS.

Customs' Duties—Colonial and Foreign	£2,472,648	15	3
Excise Duties	7,877,829	10	7
Net produce of Tax for the Year ended 31st March, 1856	£10,350,478 5 10		

There are two scales of duties on spirits; one levied by the Excise, or spirits distilled in the United Kingdom ; another levied by the Customs, on foreign spirits imported. The first is levied in England at the rate of 7*s.* 6*d.* ; in Ireland 2*s.* 8*d.* ; and in Scotland, 3*s.* 8*d.* per gallon. The second is levied at the rate of 15*s.* per gallon on foreign, and 8*s.* 10*d.* per gallon on colonial spirits. No abatement of duty is made on account of damage.

Upwards of ten millions is a large amount of revenue, and this is obtained from a commodity supposed to be as fit a subject for taxation as any that returns money to the Exchequer. Perhaps there is less evil in taxing spirits, than in taxing any other article of commerce. But still the case against the Spirit Duties remains strong. It is believed, or alleged, by many, that the absence of the duties would so reduce the price of spirits, as greatly to increase intemperance. But this is altogether fallacious.

If cheapness of intoxicating drinks promoted drunkenness as a rule, those classes of society which have the highest purchasing ability should, as a rule, be the most drunken. The converse is the fact. Drunkenness must, therefore, be looked for in some other cause than cheapness. In the United States there is no Excise Duty. Spirits, equal to "proof" strength in Britain, may be had in the United States at *one shilling a gallon*. All testimony proves that America is supplied with its intemperate classes from the "old country."

In the parliamentary evidence on drunkenness, taken in 1834, it is proved that in times of depressed trade and general distress, more drinking prevails than in times of full employment and general prosperity. This has, subsequently been ascertained to be true in Manchester, Liverpool, and other great manufacturing towns. The pecuniary ability to procure intoxicating liquors is not, therefore, the disposing cause of intoxication.

It is not the object of the present inquiry to go into the causes, or the cures, of drunkenness. It is enough to show that neither in this country, nor in America, nor in any country in Europe, does intemperance increase with the ability to purchase strong liquors. But the evidence is abundant to prove that the duties in this country are productive of serious evils, moral and commercial.

One of the most remarkable attempts to make people moral by Act of Parliament was planned by Sir Robert Walpole, and not less remarkable is the manner in which that attempt was frustrated. As this experiment may suffice for any further attempts of the kind, the following description from "Dodd's Food of London" may be read with interest by those who still entertain any doubt on this part of the question:—
"A gin law was passed, intended to put down intemperance by rendering gin too dear for the humbler classes to purchase; the duty was raised to the enormous amount of 20s. per gallon; while the license duty for a retail dealer in spirits was raised to 50*l.* per annum. But how was this met? Let Sir Robert himself say, in a letter to Horace Walpole:—'The scheme that was laid was, for all the distillers that were able, to give away gratis, to all that should ask for it, as much gin and strong waters as they should desire; and the great distillers were to supply all the retailers and small shops with as much as they should want, to be distributed and given away in like manner. The shops were to begin to be opened on Tuesday evening, the eve of Michaelmas day, and to be continued and repeated on Wednesday night, that the mob being made thus drunk, might be prepared, and ready to commit any sort of mischief; and in order to this, anonymous letters were sent to the distillers and town retailers in all parts of the town, to instruct and incite them to rise and join their friends, and do as their neighbours did.'

"For six years, from 1736 to 1742, the metropolis was the scene of an almost uninterrupted conflict between the Government and the people, in respect to this Gin Act. The riot, shadowed forth by the letter of Sir Robert Walpole, was put down by the strong arm of

the law, aided by military power; but the opposition continued to show itself in milder, though not less pertinacious forms, frequently quite ludicrous in character. The apothecaries were permitted to sell spirits as a medicine; and advantage was taken of this permission to drive a trade under false colours. Almost immediately after the Act came into operation, the apothecaries had a prodigious demand for 'gripe water,' 'cholic water,' and so forth, the spirituous nature of which may be readily surmised. One apothecary sold drams which were coloured red to appear medicinal; and around the bottle was wrapped a paper with these directions: 'Take two or three spoonfuls of this four or five times a day, or as often as the fit takes you.' The gin-shops and low taverns, not allowed to sell gin openly, exhibited numerous liquors which, though disguised in name and appearance, contained gin as one ingredient. The list of such drinks was quite formidable, 'sangaree,' 'tow-row,' 'cuckold's comfort,' 'parliament gin,' 'make-shift,' the 'last shift,' 'the ladies' delight,' 'the baulk,' 'King Theodore,' 'cholic water,' 'gripe water,' &c.: even the modern Americans have not a greater number of odd names for beverages than had the London tavern keepers of Walpole's time. More than two thousand persons were, in various ways, prosecuted for offences against the Gin Act during the short period of six years; but the attempt was all in vain, the drinkers vanquished the Government, and the Legislature repealed the Act in 1742. It was to those days that Hogarth's 'Gin Lane' belongs, that wonderful but terrible representation, in which the very houses seem reeling with drunkenness."

It must ever be an impossibility to make people moral by Act of Parliament, but to those who think otherwise, it must appear questionable morality to derive so

large a sum from a source admitted to be immoral. The history of these duties proves that taxation is not the means to combat with habits of intemperance. Such habits are not the effects of cheap spirits, but of a low tone of morality, with bodily and mental depression ; and it must be Education, not Excise, and uplifting the physical, as well as the moral condition, that will put a stop to such evils.

A much more effectual mode of counteracting intemperate habits would be, to untax altogether such articles as tea, coffee, and sugar. Mr. Porter, in his "Progress of the Nation," says at page 582:—"If, by reason of the cheapness of provisions, the wages of the labourer afford means for indulgence, sugar, tea, and coffee are the articles to which he earliest has recourse, and his family partake in the sober gratification. On the other hand, it will often happen that when the power of buying these is not enjoyed, the small sum that can still be paid after the purchase of his loaf, is bestowed in procuring that stimulating draught which is then more than ever desired, and the man is driven from his cottage to the public-house. We may thus reconcile the apparent anomaly which has been so often remarked, that the Excise revenue maintains its level during even lengthened periods of distress."

This tax, however, interferes with a very important home manufacture, and, as such, is a direct tax on native industry, limiting the employment of the people ; and, to the extent in which it does this, it is responsible for all the evils which follow therefrom.

To the duty on foreign spirits, however, must be attributed the greatest evils, in demoralising the lower classes of the people. It is this which created, and has sustained, the trade of the smuggler, ruining the honest trader, filling the gaols with criminals (too often guilty of the deepest crimes, not even excepting

murder); increasing borough and county rates; adding to the expenses of collection by rendering necessary the preventive service, and proving itself a prolific source of social evils of the darkest dye.

Another of the serious evils consequent on the high duties on spirits is, the practice of adulteration, which is carried on to a most alarming extent; destructive not only of health, but also of life, to an incalculable amount. Of these villainous compounds, one of the most extensively used is oil of vitriol. Those who wish to know more particulars of the deplorable effects of these noxious ingredients, must refer to the collected evidence in various forms before the public. But from the abundant evidence, here are two extracts:—"It is, no doubt, to the unprincipled adulterations of food, spirits, malt liquors, &c., that a great number of sudden deaths, which are constantly happening in and about the metropolis, is assignable. The adulteration, it is true, is not sufficient to cause instant death, but it operates slowly, silently, and imperceptibly, so as not to excite sufficient suspicion and inquiry respecting the cause. This is a remark founded on much observation and very probable grounds. It is hoped that it will awaken public attention and inquiry respecting these nefarious transactions."—*Oracle of Health*.

"We have reason to believe *that the drugs* with which the ordinary kinds of gin, as well as malt liquor are universally adulterated, have greatly tended to this melancholy result,—the recent increase of insanity."—*Report of the Hanwell Lunatic Asylum, Middlesex*.

The loss by the duty on British spirits it is hardly possible to compute with accuracy, owing to the absence of any reliable information as to the quantity of malt used in distillation, the difficulty of ascertaining the distiller's expenses, and the manner in which the whole subject is perplexed by rectifying, mixing, and adulte-

rating the spirit. Enough, however, is known, to show that the loss to the public on British spirits is more than on beer.

That the Irish drink more spirits per head than the English, and the Scotch more than the Irish, is known both from popular observation, and from Excise returns; while it is unquestionable that the English drink more beer than the Irish or Scotch.

The following are the Excise returns in the Spirit Trade, for the year 1856.

	DUTY PAID. Gallons.	HOME CONSUMPTION. Gallons.
England . . .	9,900,738	9,343,549
Scotland . . .	7,238,954	7,175,939
Ireland . . .	6,787,761	6,781,068
	<u>23,922,453</u>	<u>23,300,556</u>

The “home made” spirits mentioned above, are, of course, exclusive of rum, brandy, and hollands,—all of which are under the care of the Customs, instead of the Excise.

The following are the Customs’ returns in the Spirit Trade for the year 1856.

	DUTY PAID. Gallons.	HOME CONSUMPTION. Gallons.
Rum . . .	7,169,163	3,424,077
Brandy . . .	2,540,807	1,534,693
Geneva . . .	195,925	27,308
	<u>9,905,895</u>	<u>4,986,078</u>

This gives nearly 29 millions of British and Foreign Spirits, to be divided among about 29 millions of inhabitants in the United Kingdom; or, about a gallon of spirits per head per annum. The smuggled and illicitly distilled spirits constitute two additional items, concerning which the public are in the dark.

Twenty gallons of beer per head per annum, and one gallon of spirits per head per annum, are, therefore, both clearly under the mark of the annual consumption of the United Kingdom.

The quantities of Spirits imported in the last three years, according to the Customs' returns, were as follows:—

CUSTOMS.	IMPORTED.			HOME CONSUMPTION.		
	1854.	1855.	1856.	1854.	1855.	1856.
Rum . Proof Gall.	8,625,907	8,714,337	7,169,163	3,227,122	3,224,264	3,424,077
Brandy . . "	2,963,027	1,943,908	2,540,807	1,863,022	1,526,161	1,584,693
Geneva . . "	184,157	219,041	195,925	25,765	25,241	27,308

The quantities of Spirits charged with duties of Excise in the last three years, according to the official returns, were as follows:—

EXCISE.	DUTY PAID.			HOME CONSUMPTION.		
	1854.	1855.	1856.	1854.	1855.	1856.
England . Gall.	11,138,047	10,601,609	9,900,738	10,889,611	10,304,100	9,343,549
Scotland . . "	6,569,730	5,355,612	7,233,954	6,553,239	5,344,319	7,175,939
Ireland . . "	8,440,734	6,228,856	6,787,761	8,440,734	6,228,856	6,781,068
United Kingdom	26,148,511	22,186,077	23,922,453	25,883,584	21,957,275	23,300,556

COFFEE.

Customs' Duty.—Net produce of Tax for the

Year ended 31st March, 1856 £587,636 16 3

This tax was formerly 6*d.* per lb. on foreign coffee, and 4*d.* per lb. on colonial; but by the alteration of

duties, in April 1851, was reduced to 3*d.* per lb. on all descriptions; and no abatement of the duty is to be made on account of damage.

Coffee being an important article of food, and affording a cheap, wholesome, and agreeable beverage for all classes, and for the poor especially, ought, under no considerations to be taxed. Many of the objections to the tax on tea, apply to the tax on coffee; and the great facilities of evading or reducing this duty by adulteration, is another and strong objection to it. The extensive robberies of coffee which are continually being committed in the bonded warehouses, is another objection. But the strongest of all is to be found in the civilising agency of coffee, as a competitor against intoxicating liquors. How much more powerful would be this civilising agency if tea, coffee, and sugar were consumable at their natural prices,—the prices of perfect free trade! The domestic comforts of the poor man's home, how would they be multiplied under such a state of things!

The quantities of Coffee imported in the last three years, according to the Customs' returns, were as follows:—

	IMPORTED.			HOME CONSUMPTION.		
	1854.	1855.	1856.	1854.	1855.	1856.
Coffee . lbs.	66,900,358	64,061,479	56,684,315	37,471,014	35,876,116	35,139,731

It thus appears that the quantity retained for "Home Consumption" is a little more than half the quantity imported, and that this allows about 1½ lb. per head per annum, on the entire population of the United Kingdom. About the time when George the Third ascended the throne, the coffee consumed in the United Kingdom did not amount to an ounce per head per annum on the whole population.

The following may be taken as about the annual consumption of Coffee per head in other countries:—

Prussia	.	.	.	.	3½ lbs.
Zollverein (average)	.	.	.	.	3½ „
Denmark	.	.	.	.	5½ „
Belgium	.	.	.	.	9 „
America	.	.	.	.	8 „

SUGAR AND MOLASSES.

Customs' Duties	.	.	.	.	£5,223,530	2	0
Sugar used by Brewers—Excise Duty	.	.	.	.	3,535	10	9
Net produce of Tax for the Year ended							
31st March, 1856	.	.	.	.	£5,227,065	12	9

Sugar, from being a luxury, has become a necessary of life. This tax is equal to about 10s. in every 20s. on the average price of sugar; but the recent great advance in the price of sugar has reduced the proportion to about 7s. in every 20s. No abatement of duty is made on account of damage.

Nearly all the objections to taxes on articles of consumption apply in full force to this tax, and all the moral and social advantages which have been urged in favour of a free trade in tea and coffee, apply with equal force to a free trade in sugar.

By the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the Session of 1857, the duties on sugar will be reduced according to the following scale:— The present duty on refined sugar of 20s. per cwt., will be reduced, in the year 1858, to 18s. 4d.; in the following year, to 16s. 8d.; in 1859, to 15s., and in subsequent years, to 13s. 4d. The present duty on brown sugar, of 13s. 9d., to be in 1857, 12s. 8d.; in 1858, 11s. 8d.; in 1859-60, 10s. 7d., and after that period, 9s. 6d.

The present duty on yellow sugar, or "brown-clayed," of 15s., to be in 1857, 13s. 10d.; in 1858, 11s. 8d.; in 1859, and subsequently, 10s. 6d.

The quantities of Sugar imported in the last three years, according to the Customs' returns, were as follows:—

SUGAR.	IMPORTED.			HOME CONSUMPTION.		
	1854.	1855.	1856.	1854.	1855.	1856.
Total of Sugar unrefined . Cwts.	9,112,364	7,324,133	7,761,614	8,100,423	7,396,697	7,240,636
Total of Sugar refined . "	405,514	424,423	187,351	304,128	288,645	258,929
Total of Molasses .	1,022,178	879,661	943,386	929,811	922,527	942,223

It is supposed, on the best estimates which can be formed, that, if all the sugar consumed in the United Kingdom had been equally divided, the consumption during the first forty years of the present century, would have been about 16 lbs. per head per annum; but during the last sixteen years, the consumption has increased much faster than the population, and in 1856 the consumption amounted to about 36 lbs. per head. Mr. Porter, in speculating how the supply was distributed among the different classes of society, arrived at the following conclusion, at a time when the consumption was about 24 lbs. per head: he supposed that the *rich and middle classes* take about 40 lbs. per head per annum, and that this quantity remains pretty nearly equal year after year, whether the price be constant or variable; consequently, any cheapening of sugar must affect its sale chiefly among the humbler classes. His idea evidently was, that the enormous increase in the consumption is due to the extension of this luxury to those who could not afford to purchase it when prices were high; that it is, in short, a distinct and positive

increase to the comforts of four-fifths of our population—being those who are not included in Mr. Porter's "rich and middle classes."

Sugar, having become a necessary of life, is more generally and variously diffused throughout our domestic economy, than any other article not produced on British soil; and yet sugar is made to contribute more largely to the revenue than any other taxed article.

That it is not produced, to some extent, on British soil, is attributable to the policy of *indirect* taxation; also to the protective monopoly accorded, over a long period of time, to the Colonies; and, in some degree, to the protection enjoyed by corn-growers on British soil. "Assist us in maintaining our monopoly of sugar in the Colonies," said the planters to the corn and rent-owners, "and you will find our parliamentary interest upholding the corn-laws. You *may* produce beet-root sugar in England, but what will its value be to you compared with your protection to come?" The landed interest understood this argument, and voted for an Excise duty of 24*s.* per cwt. on sugar made from beet, or any other home-grown plant, which operated as a prohibition. This occurred in 1837, owing, it is believed, to some capitalists with improved machinery having, during four or five previous years, entered into the culture of beet, and the manufacture of sugar. At a former period, when manufactured in England, it was supposed that the saccharine matter in the white beet—that most prolific of sugar—was only $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. It has been since proved to contain, at least, 10 per cent., of which, over 6 per cent., or about two-thirds, is easily extractable, and may be refined as well as any cane sugar; the mucilage and fibre of the plant remain, and, united with other food, are very valuable for feeding sheep and cattle.

This economical use of mucilage and fibre, in this

mutton and beef feeding country, would alone make the cultivation of beet as advantageous to our agriculturists, who occupy fertile soils, as any other root crop, and would cover the cost of cultivation with ordinary profits, independently of the profit of the sugar. In France, where beet sugar has been more extensively manufactured than elsewhere, those valuable remains of the plant are accounted waste, and are lost. Everywhere abroad the remains of the cane are likewise lost as waste; yet the English manufacture of beet-sugar has been written and spoken down by financiers, or colonial planters, on the ground that the plant could only produce $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of sugar, and must, therefore, be unprofitable. The willingness of skilled capitalists to enter into the manufacture is the best test of its safety. They did so between 1833 and 1836, and were driven from it in 1837, by the law enacted expressly to suppress them; and that before they had completed proper arrangements for the extensive breeding and feeding of cattle in connection with the sugar manufactories.

But the Act 1 Vict. c. 57, imposed a duty of 24s. per cwt. on all sugar made from beet-root in the United Kingdom; and the 3 and 4 Vict. c. 57, imposed the like duty, with the additional 5 per cent., on all sugar made in the United Kingdom.

The English beet-root sugar manufacturers, thus driven from England to save the revenue, to propitiate the colonial planters, and through them to secure votes for the preservation of the corn-laws, carried their capital to France. But hostility to foreigners, the inferior agriculture of that country, the meagre resources of its sugar factories, which had grown up feebly under a system of excessive protection, and the change which, about that time, withdrew the protection, and substituted for it a restrictive duty on

beet-sugar, to increase until 1848, when it would be equal to the amount of duty on French Colonial sugar; these circumstances repressed the application of capital, new science, and enterprise in France to the production of beet-sugar.

What British agriculturists may say of such revenue restrictions as those on home-grown sugar and tobacco, now that they have lost protection on their corn and cattle, remains for them to declare. But, supposing that they would derive no benefit from having liberty to cultivate and manufacture sugar and tobacco, now prohibited by the system of indirect taxation, they would gain, as consumers of untaxed commodities, with other classes; and an equitable arrangement of direct taxation must transfer some of the burthens from productive agricultural capital to that which is wholly or comparatively non-productive, while due economy in the national expenditure must lessen the whole. But there are good grounds for believing that freedom to cultivate sugar and tobacco would be taken advantage of to the great benefit of the British agriculturist. Under the present system of indirect taxation, which offers a premium upon the adulteration of every taxed article, rhubarb, docks, and various other plants are grown expressly to supply the manufacturers of tobacco. The genuine tobacco leaf if grown in our English fields, though it might be inferior to that of Virginia or Cuba, would surely be preferable to rhubarb, docks, nettles, beech-leaves, oak-leaves, old ropes, saw-dust, treacle, clay, brown paper, and the other ingredients of considerable number and variety, which are now used in the manufacture of tobacco, to cheat the purchaser and defraud the national exchequer.

Another anomaly in our system is the annoyance and loss inflicted on sugar importers and dealers, by the present absurd scales of duties, which seem to have

been invented for no other purpose than to hamper trade and protect the British refiner, by giving him an advantage over the Continental refiner. It is left entirely to the Custom House Officer to determine what sugar comes up to, or falls below, the authorised standard ; so that the contingency of the officer's being a good or a bad judge of colours,—being in a good or bad humour, —and looking at the sugar on a bright or a gloomy day,—determines, in many cases, whether the sugar shall be sold at a profit, or entail a heavy loss on the importer. Add to this,—that the standards are continually being changed, according to the caprice or illumination of the Board of Customs ; so that it not unfrequently happens that the same quantity of sugar pays different rates of duty at different ports.

It would be difficult for ingenuity to invent a more absurd scheme of financial legislation than the present system of Sugar Duties, combining, as it does, the very worst features of two systems,—that of an *ad valorem*, and an uniform tariff value.

Some of the witnesses examined by Lord George Bentinck's Committee of 1848, stated that they had been ruined by the caprice of Custom-house officers, who (having no fixed test to decide on the various kinds of sugars, and the variable qualities of some) levied duties which certain kinds were never intended to bear.

The following summary of these Custom-house officers' uncertainties, as drawn up by the chairman of the Committee, the late Lord George Bentinck, may give some notion of the actual state of things in this branch of the subject.

“ Mr. Dowding, the Surveyor-General of the Customs, was called, and having been asked,—‘ Has an opinion been expressed by the officer that the mode of collecting the duty is not satisfactory ? ’ He stated,—‘ It has never been disguised that it is an unsatisfactory

mode, because it is not a question of fact; it is, in a degree, a matter of opinion.' Being asked,—‘Are you aware what, according to Act of Parliament, constitutes the difference in the quality of different sugars under the classification law?’ He stated,—‘I apprehend I am.’ Being asked,—‘How do you define them?’ He described,—‘The elements of sugar are saccharine matter, grain, and colour; they constitute the term, *quality*.’ On being asked,—‘When you get a sample of sugar, have you no satisfactory means of ascertaining the quantity of saccharine matter in it?’ He replied,—‘Certainly not.’ Being asked,—‘Therefore, as far as regards the saccharine property of the sugar, it is not a satisfactory test?’ He said,—‘It is not.’ Being asked,—‘The grain and colour you judge of by the eye?’ He stated,—‘Yes.’ When asked,—‘Is the granulation regulated by the moisture of the sugar?’ He said,—‘Not exactly the moisture. I can hardly explain how we come to the decision. It is by feeling it, and looking at it.’ ‘Therefore it is possible one officer might determine, from his general impression, differently from what another officer might determine?’ He said,—‘I have just admitted that fact.’ ‘You also admit that, in a different state of atmosphere, the same officer might come to a different conclusion at different times?’ He said,—‘It would make a difference in the colour of the sugar.’”

Mr. Barkly, an extensive owner of sugar estates in British Guiana, subsequently appointed governor of that colony, complained that, when he did not find it practicable or profitable to complete the manufacture of his sugar in the colony, and would have shipped it home to be completed, the law did not allow him. The various enactments to protect refiners have also operated ruinously upon many merchants. The bounty upon colonial sugar, refined and exported, has also been a mischievous

tax, levied on the people of this country for the benefit of the planters. The law by which slave-grown sugar may be imported and refined in bond only to be exported, has kept merchants, refiners, and revenue officers, in ceaseless, and sometimes in ruinous conflict. By all of those laws, by others not now in existence, or not alluded to here, and by the instability of all legislation on the sugar-duties, the public have been continually subjected, in one shape or other, to losses and fraud.

The sugar-planters and West India merchants truly described one cause of their difficulties when they said, "All confidence in legislation was lost; no promise of the Legislature could be believed, for it had promised everything, and adhered to nothing. They could enter into no contracts, but at a ruinous hazard, for the revenue laws were continually changing."

For this there is no remedy, and can be none, but one—to sweep away the revenue laws from the statute-book, and the revenue cruisers from the seas. *Then* the planters will know what they have to trust to.

PAPER.

Customs' Duties	.	.	.	.	£	15,621	16	2
Excise Duty	.	.	.	.		1,031,808	0	5
Net produce of Tax for the Year ended						£1,047,429 16 7		
31st March, 1856								

The Customs' duty on foreign paper (for the protection of the British manufacturer, which he does not want) is $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ per pound on all paper, except printed or stained paper hangings, or flock paper, which is $3d.$ per pound. The Excise duty is $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ per pound on all paper, and 5 per cent. additional.

England is the only country in the world which taxes the manufacture of paper. Some conception may be

formed of the pernicious influence of the Excise laws and duty upon the paper trade, and the nation at large, by comparing the prices in this country with those of America and the Continent, and in the fact that our export trade in paper, of all descriptions, is under 6,000 tons a year.

Papers for printing and packing, which constitute the main portion of our manufacture, are twenty to forty per cent. cheaper in Belgium than in England; consequently the Customs' duty operates as a protective duty to our manufacturers to that extent, exclusive of the Excise duty. The Excise duty operates most oppressively in respect to papers used for commercial purposes; for, being charged by weight, the duty on heavy papers is from 90 to 100 per cent.; while on "thin post" it is only seven and a half per cent. upon value.

For paper which the Belgian manufacturer would sell at 16*l.* 15*s.* per ton, the English manufacturer obtains, exclusive of duty, 23*l.* 6*s.* per ton, or 39 per cent. more; or, charged with Excise duty, 38*l.* per ton, being 126 per cent. more than commerce pays in other countries.

The Americans use four times as much paper per head as we do. To what extent our paper trade would expand, if relieved from the vexatious trammels and charges of the Excise and Customs' protective duties, it is difficult to imagine. But it is easy to foresee, as a certain consequence, a very large increased consumption at home, and a greatly increased export trade, which British skill, energy, and capital, never fail to command when brought into fair competition with the foreign manufacturer; and that an immense addition to the demand upon the labour market would be a necessary consequence.

It is also difficult to say to what a variety of *new* purposes the products of our paper mills would be applied if exempt from duty.

With mill-board at 8*l.* per ton, such as is produced by Belgian manufacturers, its employment, however, might be confidently predicted for many purposes for which, by these duties, it is now precluded; and, as one instance, may be mentioned the manufacture of hat-boxes, superseding, by their great superiority and trifling cost, the present fragile hat-box, made from scaleboard. Our paper-hanging trade would also be certain of receiving a great impetus, thus giving employment in this branch of business to a vast number of additional hands. The consumption of printing-papers for home consumption, and for export, would also necessarily be vastly increased, and would be attended with a corresponding increased amount of employment to compositors, pressmen, folders, binders, &c. &c.

The French export trade in paper in 1855 amounted to 16,242,600 kilogrammes, equal to 15,952 tons, 11 cwt. 8 lbs., or more than three times the amount of the export trade in paper of this country for the same year; and, if the returns of the American and Belgian export trade in paper could be obtained, these would, probably, be found to be still greater than the French.

The proportion of the Excise duty on some descriptions of coarse paper is 100 per cent., and on all descriptions of coarse paper from 50 to 100 per cent.; and on lighter kinds, in common use, from 7 to 20 per cent.; but on sheathing paper, which is extensively used for laying on ships' bottoms under copper, it is 100 per cent. An ordinary newspaper pays a duty of 21 per cent. on the paper it uses.

These duties force the paper trade into the hands of a small number of *wholesale* stationers, who combine, and the paper-makers and the public suffer from the monopoly. The *wholesale* stationers, therefore, alone, of all traders in paper, defend the continuance of the duties.

Printers, stationers, booksellers, newsvenders, bookbinders, typefounders, artists, copperplate and lithographic printers, cardmakers, paperstainers, and paperhangers, are all directly obstructed in their trade by the duty on paper; so is the author; and, besides the public, for whose use paper is made, the duty is indirectly an obstruction to the industry of millwrights, and other mechanics.

But the British Government seems to consider it not enough that, in addition to the Excise duty, the consumers of paper should be required to pay from twenty to forty per cent. more for the article than is paid in other countries; that the publishing and other important branches of the trade should thus be crippled or impeded; and that nearly all the export trade should be thrown into the hands of foreign manufacturers; for English publishers are now exposed to unequal competition, and English labour is superseded (in the employment of foreign compositors, printers, artists, and others) by foreign publishers being allowed to bring into this country the works of English authors, printed in the English language, at actually a lower rate of duty than English publishers would have to pay on the very paper upon which such works are printed!

It is very well and right to allow foreign publishers to import into this country at a low duty, and would be much better to allow them to import free of duty; but it seems to be a stupid inconsistency to tax the English publisher so highly that he cannot compete with the foreigner in his country, and at the same time to encourage the foreign publisher to compete with the English publisher in his own country.

In 1840, the paper-maker became the victim of a "financial necessity:" the Whig administration had, for about four years consecutively, announced a deficit;

when, at last, a Whig financier summoned courage to solve the difficulty, and resolved to make both ends meet; not by curtailing the increased expenditure — not by opening new fountains of wealth to the Exchequer, but by adding five per cent. to the amount of the existing assessed taxes, Customs, and Excise. Mr. Hume proposed, as an amendment, a scheme which has since been carried out by Mr. Gladstone, namely, the imposition of a tax on the succession to real property. Sir Robert Peel, however, supported the scheme of Sir Francis Baring as a happy device, saying, that it was not worth while to propose an income tax for so small a sum as 2,500,000*l.*; and when Sir Francis Baring's plan failed, and a larger deficiency had to be supplied, Sir Robert Peel displayed his consistency by imposing the income tax, and, at the same time, retaining the five per cent. The effect of this five per cent. addition, or three-tenths of a farthing to the existing three halfpence, ruined a number of small paper-makers. It is not difficult to see why. Three halfpence per pound is 14*l.* per ton; five per cent. on 14*l.* is 14*s.* A mill turning out eight tons per week, and realising a profit of 300*l.* a year on 416 tons, would, on the increase of duty, have to pay an extra sum of 291*l.* 4*s.* to the tax-gatherer. It is customary to assert that all taxes on articles of consumption fall on the consumer; and so they do in the long run; but the 14*s.* a ton was too small a sum to be charged at first on the consumer. The small capitalist paid the increased duty out of his own pocket, sold his paper at the old price, and quietly betook himself, first to the Insolvent Court, and then to the United States. The large capitalist also paid the duty out of his own pocket, waited till the small men were ruined, and then raised the price to the consumer. Among the large capitalists are some who openly avow, that they wish the duty was doubled.

The actual number of paper-mills is a secret in possession of the Excise; but, prior to the imposition of the additional five per cent. tax, the number of the mills in the United Kingdom was supposed to exceed 700, and in 1852 the number was supposed to be under 400. Assuming the decrease to be only 300, and only twenty persons connected with each of the 300 mills broken up, this gives a total of 6000 persons reduced to pauperism, or to the necessity of seeking new employment; and if the loss to the country be reckoned at only 10*l.* a head, this gives a total loss of 60,000*l.*, which is more than the sum which would have been realised to the revenue by the additional five per cent.

From the best information which can be obtained, it is believed that the number of paper-mills now (1857) at work in the kingdom is under 300, and that this number continues to decrease as the smaller manufacturers continue to fail to meet the revenue collectors, through the monopolist wholesale stationers. It is probable that, in a few years more, if this tax be continued, the whole paper-making trade will be in the hands of a very few persons of large capital, who may then combine to exact their own price from the public.

This duty was first imposed in 1711, by the Act 10 Anne, c. 19, under "the necessity of raising large sums of money to carry on the war;" and, as observed by Mr. Porter, "surely it required a strong case of necessity to justify the imposition of a tax which tended so directly to impede the progress of knowledge among the people."

So long ago as 1835, a Royal Commission, of which Sir Henry Parnell was chairman, recommended that, as soon as it was possible, the Excise should be abolished on leather, glass, and paper. The Excise on leather is happily numbered with things gone by; and we are every day reminded of the removal of the

Excise on glass, by the glittering dome of the Crystal Palace. Results as important in literature, in art, and in manufactures, may be predicated as the reward of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who shall abolish the Excise on paper. Mr. Gladstone, when chancellor of the exchequer, declared himself favourable to the removal of the Excise duty on paper; indeed, it was weighed in the balance against the soap duty, and retained, only that that premium on dirt might be abolished. Certainly, if cleanliness be very nearly a virtue, — and it is sufficiently so to be its own reward, — the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who gave up the tax on soap, performed a virtuous act; and some think the effects are already visible in all classes of society; but, it must be admitted, that the old familiar, though not very polite, greeting, amongst a certain class, “How are you off for soap?” is now not nearly so often heard in our streets, and, indeed, may be said to be obsolete. Many, who remember the saying of Charles Lamb, at one of his small evening whist parties, to his old friend Jeremy Bentham, who was never particular, however singular, in his outward appearance, — “Well, if dirt were trumps, what a hand you would have!” — may think, and not unreasonably, that we owe this droll saying to the tax on soap, but that even this drollery was dearly bought at the price of the soap tax, which was little short of a million a-year! Another celebrity in politics, as also in literature, Mr. Disraeli, with a number of Conservative gentlemen, who look up to him as their leader, voted, in 1851, for the removal of this impediment in the path of progress.

That the paper-duty tax acts as a tax on knowledge has been recognised from the beginning by the fact, that Bibles, Prayer-books, and works published by the Universities in the Latin, Greek, northern, and oriental languages, are allowed the privilege of a drawback by

the Act of Anne. Why the horn-book of the artisan's child should be taxed, while the rare books of the rich collegian are exempted, is a question to which the people are entitled to a fair answer, and the present Chancellor of the Exchequer should be informed, that the answer which he lately gave to that question, — that, "so few persons read works in those languages," — is not a fair or satisfactory answer, while the tax is exacted from other works, which do not pay their own expenses.

On the article called Florentine buttons, made at the mill, of what is commonly considered brown paper, no duty is paid; while the very same substance, if it leave the mill in sheets, or if, though made into buttons it be covered with white paper, is charged with duty, and must, therefore, be supposed to be paper.

The people have a right to be informed, on the best authority, whether that which is taxable paper, or millboard, when it is a foot square, ceases to be so when cut into discs; and if so, how the covering of these discs with white, re-invests them with the character of paper.

Another strange anomaly exists in regard to paste-board. The Act requires that the pasteboard-maker, not being a mill-owner, shall weigh his paper in the presence of an Exciseman, and shall, when his paste-board is made, pay a duty on the increased weight. It is said that most of the Birmingham pasteboard-makers evade this duty, by making a paste, by some process not generally understood, which actually diminishes the weight of the paper.

But the anomalies, absurdities, and injustice, of Excise duties are endless, and, being inherent in the system, are irremediable, but by total abolition. The time is come when all these miserable delusions must be

exposed, and all these absurd inconsistencies must be swept away. The injurious effects of the paper duty, as a tax on knowledge and industry, it is impossible to estimate fully, and all that can be said is, that it is a disgrace to a civilised country, as all countries in the world, except England, seem to acknowledge.

The following are the Excise returns on Paper for the last three years:—

EXCISE.	DUTY PAID.			HOME CONSUMPTION.		
PAPER.	1854. <i>lbs.</i>	1855. <i>lbs.</i>	1856. <i>lbs.</i>	1854. <i>lbs.</i>	1855. <i>lbs.</i>	1856. <i>lbs.</i>
England .	131,797,759	123,552,869	139,752,062	118,846,692	113,823,662	1196,939,587
Scotland .	38,153,165	35,932,985	40,100,234	35,008,763	34,550,393	38,126,829
Ireland . .	7,945,300	7,290,540	7,864,279	7,928,749	7,283,788	7,851,180
United Kingdom	177,896,224	166,776,294	187,716,575	161,784,204	155,657,843	172,917,596

BUTTER

Customs' Duty. — Net produce of Tax for the'

Year ended 31st March, 1856

£113,205 19 10

This being a necessary article of food, it is unfit for taxation. Besides, it seems too much like a mockery to take the tax off bread, and to continue the tax on butter. To tax the bread and butter of a people is a wicked folly; and the sooner this remnant of the old and vicious system is abolished the better.

The present duty is 10s. per cwt., and 5 per cent. additional.

The quantities of butter imported in the last three

years, according to the Customs' returns, were as follows:—

	IMPORTED.			HOME CONSUMPTION.		
	1854.	1855.	1856.	1854.	1855.	1856.
Butter . . cwt.	482,514	447,266	514,764	478,811	448,268	498,378

CHEESE.

Customs' Duty. — Net produce of Tax for the

Year ended 31st March, 1856. £48,808 6 1

This being a wholesome and most convenient article of food, it is also unfit for taxation. It is as stupid and unjust to tax a people's bread and cheese, as to tax their bread and butter, and to take the tax off bread, and to keep the tax on cheese, is a mockery unworthy of any government.

The present duty is 5s. per cwt. and 5 per cent. additional.

The quantities of cheese imported in the last three years, according to the Customs' returns, were as follows:—

	IMPORTED.			HOME CONSUMPTION.		
	1854.	1855.	1856.	1854.	1855.	1856.
Cheese . . . cwt.	388,714	384,192	407,076	390,220	381,282	395,964

TALLOW.

Customs' Duty.—Net produce of Tax for the
 Year ended 31st March, 1856. . . . £57,177 8 11

This is a tax on a raw article of manufacture, injurious to the productive industry of the country, and pressing most heavily on the poor. Even the amount produced is too small to afford an argument for the continuance of this hard and impolitic tax.

The quantities of tallow imported in the last three years, according to the Customs' returns, were as follows:—

	IMPORTED.			HOME CONSUMPTION.		
	1854.	1855.	1856.	1854.	1855.	1856.
Tallow . . . cwts.	749,721	952,322	1,124,843	768,117	829,124	1,016,309

COCOA AND CHOCOLATE.

Customs' Duty.—Net produce of Tax for the
 Year ended 31st March, 1856. . . . £19,477 5 9

These, as articles of wholesome and nutritious food, peculiarly suited to the poor and working classes, are amongst the last which should be taxed for the purposes of revenue; and, but for the tax, these might be supplied, to any required amount, at little more than half the present prices.

The quantities of cocoa imported in the last three

years, according to the Customs' returns, were as follows:—

	IMPORTED.			HOME CONSUMPTION.		
	1854.	1855.	1856.	1854.	1855.	1856.
Cocoa . . lbs.	5,258,367	7,376,053	7,343,468	4,563,782	4,471,553	3,762,594

EGGS.

Customs' Duty.—Net produce of Tax for the
Year ended 31st March, 1856. £17,910 18 5

These are articles of wholesome and nutritious food, which, but for the tax, might be brought within the reach of the poorest classes in this country, to their great comfort and advantage.

The numbers of eggs imported in the last three years, according to the Customs' returns, were as follows:—

	IMPORTED.			HOME CONSUMPTION.		
	1854.	1855.	1856.	1854.	1855.	1856.
Eggs . No.	121,946,801	99,732,800	117,419,800	122,342,556	100,006,200	117,398,000

CURRENTS AND RAISINS.

Customs' Duties.—Currants £119,660 3 4
 „ „ Raisins 124,066 5 8
 Net produce of Tax for the Year ended }
 31st March, 1856 £243,726 9 0

These are articles of wholesome food, the consumption of which, amongst the poorer classes, would be im-

mensely increased, but for the tax, which operates as a prohibition to a very large portion of the poor and working classes of this country.

The fiscal treatment of the currant trade by the British Government is at once illustrative of the general injustice and impolicy of our Customs' duties. It may, or may not, be a question, whether an article in universal demand shall be maintained at a fictitious price, and above the means of the mass of the community, by state exactions; but it is beyond question, that the duty levied upon such an article ought to be reduced whenever, by such reduction, a better supply, at a lower price, may be attainable in the conjoint interest of the British consumer and of the national exchequer.

And this view of the question will be fully borne out by a candid review of the condition of the currant trade under the varying tariffs of the last forty-three years.

The world derives its supply of dried Currants from the Morea and the islands of Zante and Cephalonia, the former being a peninsula at the southern extremity of the kingdom of Greece, and the two latter being under the government of the Ionian Islands, which may be described as Anglo-Colonial. About three-fifths of the total supply is the growth of the Morea, the remaining two-fifths being the produce of the islands.

The quantity exported from the currant-producing countries in 1856 was 27,000 tons, of which 21,707 tons were shipped to the United Kingdom.

This country may, therefore, be considered the currant market of the world: 1. Because it is the general entrepôt whence other countries draw their supplies; and 2. Because the consumption of the article by our population far surpasses that of any other people,—

exceeding, on an average of years, the consumption of all other nations.

In 1813, the duty levied upon currants (from 1809) being 37*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* per ton, was raised to 44*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*, which, in 1834, was reduced to 22*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.*; and in 1844 to 15*l.* 15*s.*, at which it still remains.

EFFECTS OF THESE REDUCTIONS.

PERIODS.	DUTY.	AVERAGE ANNUAL	
		Consumption.	Price.
For the Twenty Years from 1814 to 1833 inclusive	£ s. d. 44 6 8	Tons. 5,593	£ s. d. 97 0 0
„ Ten Years „ 1834 to 1843 „	22 3 4	9,296	67 0 0
„ Thirteen Years „ 1844 to 1856 „	15 15 0	14,912	50 0 0

The consumption between the former periods increased 60 per cent., and the price fell 30 per cent.

The consumption between the latter periods increased 60 per cent., and the price fell 25 per cent.

PECUNIARY RESULTS OF THE LOWER DUTY FROM 1844 TO 1856 INCLUSIVE.

	ANNUAL AVERAGE.	AGGREGATE.
Gain to the Exchequer in the Thirteen Years . . .	£43,393	£564,108
Saving to the British Consumer in reduction of Duty; viz., 14,912 Tons annually at £6 8 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i> . . .	95,685	1,243,907
Saving to the British Consumer in reduction of Price beyond the reduction of Duty; viz., 14,912 Tons annually at £17	253,540	3,295,552
Total	£392,618	£5,103,568

More conclusive evidence of the sound policy of low tariffs could scarcely be adduced in the whole range of

Customs' duties, especially as the average of the existing tariff has been most prejudicially affected by a blight of four years' duration, reducing the consumption by two-thirds for that period, and trebling the price of the commodity.

In the year preceding that calamity (1851), the import (36,055 tons) and the consumption (22,738 tons) were the largest ever known; its produce far exceeding the aggregate yield of the three years, 1853, 1854, and 1855.

Now, it is a remarkable fact, that notwithstanding so serious an interruption of the trade for four consecutive years, and the concurrent diminution of our supply, and of the proceeds of the duty for the entire period of thirteen years from the last reduction (1844-1856), the returns to the Exchequer have exceeded the average returns of the preceding ten years (1834-1843), under the higher duty, by 21 per cent.

The consumption under the present duty has produced an annual average revenue for the whole term of its existence, and inclusive of the four years of blight, of	£249,579
The consumption for the whole period of ten years under the higher duty yielded an average revenue of only	206,186
Giving an annual increased revenue for the lower } duty of	£43,393

These facts seem to support an unanswerable argument for, at least, such a reduction of duty as will secure a better supply at a more reasonable price, the demand being, at present, limited by our system of Customs' duties, to the ridiculous average of less than two ounces per week for a family of five persons!

In the ability of every family in the United Kingdom to consume 1 lb. weekly of this important article of do-

mestic use, we have an eightfold power of consumption; and the capacity of the currant fields of the Mediterranean to increase their supply is equally great and incontrovertible. It is a most important fact that, within the last two or three years, the cultivators of the Morea have increased their currant plantations by upwards of 7,000 acres. That there will be an abundant supply is most probable; but it is by no means certain that the increased production will be sent to the British market.

Hence it is clearly to our fiscal regulations alone that any short supply or excess of price will be attributable; for with good currants, at a low price, the present demand would be speedily doubled.

The consumption of 1 lb. of currants by each family per week would absorb an annual supply of 139,285 tons; of $\frac{1}{2}$ lb., 69,642 tons; of but $\frac{1}{4}$ lb., 34,821 tons.

The notorious popularity of this fruit, and its well-known palatable and wholesome qualities, should secure for it a universal consumption, and would but for fiscal intervention. How, otherwise, is it to be explained that the population of the United Kingdom consume, upon an average — man, woman, and child — more per head of the tobacco weed than of this nutritious and agreeable food?

An abundant supply being necessary to cheapness — cheapness being the direct inducement to an improved and largely-increased consumption — and general consumption being the precursor of an improved revenue, it is obviously the interest of all parties that the producers of a commodity calculated to enter so certainly and extensively into the daily use of the masses of our population should be encouraged by fiscal liberality, and stimulated by government care, advice, and patronage. Heavy duties militate against that abundance of supply which is the keystone of cheapness, consumption, and

revenue ; and it is by such exactions that production is depressed and a natural demand restricted.

By the states of the Ionian Islands an export duty is levied upon currants of 18 per cent., which is a direct charge upon their cultivation ; and, in addition to this, the British Government levies an import duty amounting to 50 per cent., not only upon the first value of the commodity, but also upon the export duty to which it has been previously subjected ; so that our Customs' duty is 50 per cent. upon the currants, and 50 per cent. upon the 18 per cent. levied at the port of shipment, or 59 per cent. levied upon the value of the produce.

This is manifestly in discouragement of the trade, in prevention both of production and consumption, and in restraint of the natural expansion of a legitimate revenue. The commercial policy of other countries may be advantageously contrasted with that of our government, notwithstanding its large pretensions as the enunciator of free-trade principles and commercial liberalism.

Austria, as also the Germanic Union of Customs (the Zollverein) — established for the maintenance of protective, and therefore anti-British, principles of fiscal regulations — impose a duty upon currants of 11*l.* the ton ; whilst the British Government, professing an enlightened adaptation of free-trade principles to its fiscal policy, imposes a Customs' duty of 15*l.* 15*s.* the ton. In other words, the inhabitants of the countries embraced by the Zollverein are privileged by the British Government to consume currants 4*l.* 15*s.* per ton cheaper than the population of the United Kingdom.

The import duty in Holland is 1*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* and in France 5*s.* per ton.

Russia has, this year (1857), reduced her Customs' duty from 7*l.* to 4*l.* per ton ; and the United States, from an *ad valorem* duty of 16*l.*, to one of about 3*l.* 5*s.* per ton.

Under these circumstances, the question naturally arises, how long this country may reasonably expect to continue the currant market of the world? or, how long Great Britain may be considered by the cultivators of the Mediterranean the best market for the consignment and sale of their produce?

So far as the article of currants is concerned, and so far as Government can control the price of the commodity by its fiscal regulations, the consumers of the United Kingdom have to pay a higher price for it than those of any other country. This partakes rather of oppression than of free trade—of a narrow-minded policy than of a liberal one; and is, most assuredly, not less suicidal than it is anti-national.

To the extent that a supply may be necessary to meet the imperative demands of the higher class of consumers in this country, price may not materially interfere with their requirements, and the amount of duty may be, therefore, a matter of perfect indifference; but, with the middle classes, a higher tariff will stint the consumption which else would have been great and constant; whilst, with the millions of operatives, it will have the effect of actual prohibition and total deprivation. In the latter case, other nations, more fortunate in the fiscal liberality and justice of their rulers, will compete successfully with us for the supply to which we seem indifferent, and a good and beneficial trade may be lost to us, which always has been, and promises to be yet more, beneficial to all the parties concerned; for it must not be forgotten that the currant growers of the Ionian Islands gladly accept payment for their produce in the manufactured products of our skilled industry. In point of fact, we buy the currants with our manufactures, and they our manufactures with their currants, our exports for the five years, 1851—5, being of the value of 819,166*l.*, besides colonial produce to the

extent of more than 60,000*l.*, against imports of the value only of 642,037*l.*

That British shipowners are directly and largely interested in the extension of our traffic with Greece and the Ionian Islands will be seen from the following statement, compiled from the official returns of the Board of Trade, and showing that this international exchange is carried on chiefly in British bottoms:—

1851.	British ships	75	per cent.	British tonnage	64	per cent.
1852.	"	77	"	"	63	"
1853.	"	67	"	"	55	"
1854.	"	68	"	"	61	"
1855.	"	74	"	"	69	"

It is notorious that the United States are actively and successfully competing with this country for the supply of dried fruit, and at a decided advantage under our present excessive tariff. Indeed, nothing less than a general deduction of duty to 5*s.* per cwt. on currants, raisins, and figs, can prevent the decadence, if not the ruin, of the British trade in those commodities. It is a significant fact that, whereas the United States took from us but 5½ tons of currants in 1853, they increased their purchases in 1854 to 262, and in 1855 to 365 tons—those three years being years of blight and scarcity. What may we not expect this year with our Customs' duty 500 per cent. higher than that imposed upon our wise and energetic competitors? In raisins they are already treading upon our heels, whilst of figs they last year imported to the value of 65,300*l.* against our imports of 62,700*l.*; and this, be it remembered, under a duty nearly, if not quite, equivalent to that of the British tariff! How it will be this year may be safely predicted. Free-trade America will win the race, unless the limbs of our commerce be unshackled promptly and effectually.

It would, therefore, appear, under every aspect of the case, that a statesman-like view of the interests of the United Kingdom demands the adoption of at least as enlightened and liberal a policy as that of other countries for the fiscal regulations of the British Government, as affecting dried fruit generally, and this interesting and not unimportant branch of that trade in particular.

But if such would be a statesman-like view, how far longer-sighted, and much greater for the interests of this country, would be the view which at once abolished the whole of these duties, and thereby made Great Britain the market for the supply of these useful commodities to the whole world? What would be the increase thereby made to the trade of this country? What would be the increase of capital in this country from such increase of trade?

And if the same principle were carried out into full operation, in all branches of trade and commerce, what then would be the wealth of Great Britain, as the greatest and undisputed market of the world?

The quantities of currants and raisins imported in the last three years, according to the Customs' returns, are as follows :—

	IMPORTED.			HOME CONSUMPTION.		
	1854.	1855.	1856.	1854.	1855.	1856.
Currants . cwts.	120,253	163,729	351,795	171,231	156,348	226,171
Raisins . . „	286,857	301,284	267,231	238,019	250,994	268,201

RICE AND SAGO.

Customs' Duty.—Rice	£20,741 2 4
„ „ Sago	1,912 12 6
Net produce of Tax for the Year ended 31st March, 1856	£22,653 14 10

Rice, the duty on which is now $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ per cwt., constitutes the chief food of by far the largest portion of the whole human race, and, but for the tax, might furnish the cheapest and most nutritious food to the poor and working classes of this country, who can now obtain it only as a sort of luxury.

The quantities of rice imported in the last three years, according to the Custom-house returns, are as follows:—

	IMPORTED.			HOME CONSUMPTION.		
	1854.	1855.	1856.	1854.	1855.	1856.
Rice . cwts.	1,342,748	2,238,158	3,689,969	846,475	978,904	1,439,726
Rice in the Husk . „	18,956	18,673	32,941	21,499	21,388	28,748

Sago, the duty on which is now $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ per cwt., also furnishes a cheap, wholesome, and nutritious food, peculiarly adapted for the poor, and which might be supplied in this country in any required quantity, is now by the tax, which produces to the revenue less than 2000*l.* a year, almost unknown amongst the poor and working classes.

FIGS, DATES, ORANGES, AND LEMONS.

Customs' Duty.—Figs	£25,981	7	11
„ „ Dates	2,808	1	9
„ „ Oranges and Lemons	25,174	4	4
Net produce of Tax for the Year ended 31st March, 1856	£53,963	14	0

These wholesome fruits of the earth, which nature has so abundantly supplied, as if intending that the poorest on the face of the whole earth should enjoy them without stint, are now, by the tax, confined comparatively to the tables of the rich; and this deprivation of bounteous nature's free gifts is inflicted upon that portion of the people of this country who are its wealth-producers, and all for the sake of this contemptible revenue, which might be saved in two or three pensions annually paid to unproductive idlers.

The quantities of figs, oranges and lemons, imported in the last three years, according to the Custom-house returns, were as follows:—

	IMPORTED.			HOME CONSUMPTION.		
	1854.	1855.	1856.	1854.	1855.	1856.
Figs cwt.	29,831	44,725	43,975	34,944	32,936	35,889
Oranges and Lemons . bush.	814,065	806,152	700,677	822,699	797,140	719,027

EXCISE LICENSES.

Net produce of Tax for the Year ended 31st	
March, 1856	<u>£1,399,673 5 11</u>

These licenses are an income-tax on the persons compelled to take them out, and, *being particular in their application, are consequently unequal and unjust, and in practice most vexatious.* The following taxes also come under the same denomination :—

Excise.—Hackney Carriages	£ 69,635 19 0
„ Railways	323,790 14 5
„ Stage Carriages	<u>133,016 6 8</u>
Net produce for the Year ended 31st	} £526,443 0 1
March, 1856	

These are all taxes on the conveniences and comforts of the people, and, being injurious to the productive industry of the country, to an amount very far beyond the produce of these taxes, ought, therefore, to be abolished.

The miscellaneous articles, to all of which the foregoing remarks more or less apply, will be found in the following account of imports into the United Kingdom, taken from the official accounts, and in which will be seen what articles are free and what are still subject to duty :—

IMPORTS INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE IMPORTS AND CONSUMPTION OF THE
PRINCIPAL ARTICLES OF FOREIGN AND COLONIAL MERCHAN-
DISE, IN THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1856.

Articles.	Importations.	Quantities entered for Home Consumption.
	Quantities for which the Landing Accounts were made up, for the Year ended 31st Dec. 1856.	Articles chargeable with Duty, for the Year ended 31st Dec. 1856.
Animals, Living:—		
Oxen and bulls number	52,019	Free
Cows "	9,843	"
Calves "	21,444	"
Sheep "	135,588	"
Lambs "	9,471	"
Swine and hogs "	9,916	"
Ashes, pearl and pot cwts.	105,941	"
Barilla and alkali tons.	1,060	"
Bark for Tanners' or Dyers' use cwts.	354,168	"
Bones tons.	70,949	"
Brimstone cwts.	1,417,807	"
Caoutchouc "	28,726	"
Clocks number	244,719	241,980
Cocoa lbs.	7,343,458	3,762,594
Coffee "	56,634,315	35,139,731
Corn, viz.:—		
Wheat qrs.	4,072,833	4,107,941
Barley "	731,412	735,892
Oats "	1,146,848	1,156,790
Rye "	27,981	28,024
Peas "	86,082	86,890
Beans "	353,218	355,089
Indian corn or maize "	1,777,813	1,788,212
Buck-wheat "	91	92
Beer or bigg "	975	983
Wheat-meal, or flour cwts.	3,970,100	4,016,853
Barley-meal "	139	139
Oat-meal "	5,412	5,421
Rye-meal "	7,693	7,801

Articles.	Importations.	Quantities entered for Home Consumption.
	Quantities for which the Landing Accounts were made up, for the Year ended 31st Dec. 1856.	Articles chargeable with Duty for the Year ended 31st Dec. 1856.
Pea-meal "	37	37
Bean-meal "		
Indian corn-meal "	7,880	7,885
Buck-wheat-meal "	106	106
Cotton, raw "	9,141,844	Free
Cotton, yarn lbs.	1,116,226	"
Cotton manufactures not made up:		
East India piece goods. pieces	257,720	"
Other articles . . . value £	408,934	"
Cotton manufactures, wholly or in part made up :—		
Fringe lbs.	48,557	35,013'
Gloves pairs.	169,847	159,661
Stockings and socks . . . "	452,133	338,139
Other articles . . . value £	17,511	9,900
Cubic nitre cwts.	309,706	Free
Dyes, and dyeing stuffs :—		
Cochineal "	18,123	"
Indigo "	81,314	"
Lac dye "	10,975	"
Logwood tons.	38,880	"
Madder cwts.	121,666	"
Madder root "	199,750	"
Shumac tons.	18,658	"
Terra Japonica "	6,847	"
Cutch "	1,689	"
Valonia "	22,733	"
Embroidery and needlework :—		
By weight lbs.	69,423	68,367
By value value £	80,161	70,371
Flax, dressed cwts.	12,989	Free
" undressed "	1,454,344	"
" tow "	219,708	"
Fruits :—		
Currants "	351,795	226,171
Figs "	43,975	35,859
Lemons and oranges . . bushels	700,677	719,027
Raisins cwts.	267,231	268,201

Articles.	Importations.	Quantities entered for Home Consumption.
	Quantities for which the Landing Accounts were made up, for the year ended 31st Dec. 1856.	Articles chargeable with Duty, for the Year ended 31st Dec. 1856.
Glass manufactures:—		
Window glass, and shades, and cylinders . . . cwts.	30,762	27,787
Plate glass . . . lbs.	1,059,002	Free
White flint glass goods (except bottles) not cut, engraved, or otherwise ornamented lbs.	471,311	"
All flint cut glass, flint coloured glass, and fancy ornamental glass . . . cwts.	10,161	9,657
Guano tons	191,501	Free
Hemp, dressed . . . cwts.	25,100	"
" undressed . . . "	752,898	"
" tow . . . "	15,233	"
" jute . . . "	731,093	"
Other vegetable substances of the nature of undressed hemp . cwts.	5,502	"
Hides, untanned:—		
Dry "	218,872	"
Wet "	439,228	"
Lace, and articles thereof:—		
By weight . . . lbs.	5,082	"
By value . . . value £	3,701	"
Leather manufactures: Boots, shoes, and calashes:—		
Women's boots and calashes . pairs	35,381	31,603
Women's shoes with cork or double soles, quilted shoes, and clogs . . . pairs	6,503	6,503
Women's shoes, of silk, satin, stuff, or leather . . pairs	108,038	104,402
Men's boots and shoes . . "	38,214	31,535
Children's boots and shoes . "	1,829	909
Boot fronts . . . "	670,597	663,757
Boot Backs . . . "	2,466	2,466
Cut into shapes . . . cwts.	113	109
Gloves "	3,990,218	3,709,779
Unenumerated . . . value £	3,243	1,857
Linen manufactures:—		
Lawns, not French . . value £	1,440	Free

Articles.	Importations.	Quantities entered for Home Consumption.
	Quantities for which the Landing Accounts were made up, for the year ended 31st Dec. 1856.	Articles chargeable with Duty, for the Year ended 31st Dec. 1856.
Cambrics and French lawns, sq. yds.	189,940	Free
Damasks, and damask diapers, sq. yds.	12,281	"
Plain linen and diaper, and manufactures unenumerated, not made up . . . value £	43,905	"
Sails . . . "	2,059	"
Articles wholly or in part made up:—		
Cambric handkerchiefs no.	42,777	42,489
Unenumerated . . . value £	8,629	7,293
Mahogany tons	39,761	Free
Metals:—		
Copper ore and regulus . . . "	82,804	"
Copper, unwrought, and part wrought . . . cwts.	76,256	"
Iron, in bars, unwrought tons	51,935	"
Steel, unwrought . . . "	1,598	"
Lead, pig and sheet . . . "	10,254	"
Spelter "	18,213	"
Tin, in blocks, ingots, bars, or slabs cwts.	69,262	"
Oil:—		
Train, blubber, and spermaceti tuns	18,288	"
Palm cwts.	786,701	"
Cocoa-nut "	180,690	"
Olive tuns	21,415	"
Rapeseed "	5,852	"
Oil seed cakes "	88,256	"
Opium lbs.	81,552	42,442
Potatoes cwts.	109,838	Free
Provisions:—		
Bacon "	350,531	"
Hams "	22,264	"
Beef, salted, not corned . . . "	187,716	"
" fresh, or slightly salted . . . "	121	"

Articles.	Importations.	Quantities entered for Home Consumption.
	Quantities for which the Landing Accounts were made up, for the year ended 31st Dec. 1856.	Articles chargeable with Duty, for the year ended 31st Dec. 1856.
Pork, salted . . . cwts.	156,266	Free
" fresh . . . "		
Poultry, alive or dead . value £	48,230	"
Butter . . . cwts.	514,764	498,378
Cheese . . . "	407,076	395,964
Eggs . . . no.	117,419,800	117,395,000
Lard . . . cwts.	136,650	Free
Quicksilver . . . lbs.	576,824	"
Rice . . . cwts.	3,689,969	1,439,726
" in the husk . . qrs.	32,941	28,748
Saltpetre . . . cwts.	387,555	Free
Seeds:—		
Clover . . . "	169,449	"
Flax seed and linseed . qrs.	1,180,179	"
Rape . . . "	264,919	"
Tares. . . "	18,874	"
Silk:—		
Raw . . . lbs.	7,383,672	"
Waste, knubs and husks cwts.	17,994	"
Thrown . . . lbs.	853,015	"
Silk manufactures of Europe:—		
Silk or satin, broad stuffs lbs.	230,664	229,287
" ribbon . . "	231,574	218,363
Gauze or crape, broad stuffs "	9,586	9,554
Gauze mixed with silk, satin, or any other materials, in less proportion than one half of the fabric: viz.		
Broad stuffs . . lbs.		1
Ribbons . . . "	8,594	8,709
Velvet broad stuffs, the foundation being silk . . lbs.	28,810	27,566
Ditto, the foundation being of other materials than silk lbs.	1,145	1,174
Ribbons of velvet, or plush "	201,810	192,754
Plush for making hats . "	171,004	170,818
Silk manufactures of India pieces	597,752	108,193

Articles.	Importations.	Quantities entered for Home Consumption.
	Quantities for which the Landing Accounts were made up, for the Year ended 31st Dec. 1856.	Articles chargeable with Duty for the Year ended 31st Dec. 1856.
Spices :—		
Cassia Lignea . . . lbs.	1,408,172	137,957
Cinnamon . . . "	782,231	44,032
Cloves . . . "	1,505,674	214,708
Mace . . . "	118,110	27,299
Nutmegs . . . "	462,605	232,344
Pepper . . . "	10,732,261	3,767,118
Pimento . . . cwts.	14,683	4,011
Spirits :—		
Rum . . . proof gallons	7,169,163	3,424,077
Brandy . . . "	2,540,807	1,534,693
Geneva . . . "	195,925	27,308
Sugar, unrefined, from British Possessions in America :—		
Equal to white clayed . cwts.	3,399	3,230
Not equal to white clayed "	1,253,289	1,366,357
Not equal to brown clayed "	1,561,005	1,793,799
From Mauritius :—		
Equal to white clayed . "	9,829	2,402
Not equal to white clayed "	834,931	630,297
Not equal to brown clayed "	793,483	808,618
From British Possessions in the East Indies :—		
Equal to white clayed cwts.	54,931	9,041
Not equal to white clayed "	665,168	533,058
Not equal to brown clayed "	510,340	343,892
From other parts :—		
Equal to white clayed "	24,128	7,146
Not equal to white clayed "	804,686	691,573
Not equal to brown clayed "	1,246,425	1,051,213
Total of sugar unrefined .	7,761,614	7,240,626
Sugar, refined, and candy, from British Possessions out of		
Europe . . . cwts.	5,182	1,457
Other parts . . . "	182,169	257,472
Molasses :—		
From British Possessions out of		
Europe . . . "	313,977	296,026
Other parts . . . "	629,309	646,197

Articles.	Importations.	Quantities entered for Home Consumption.
	Quantities for which the Landing Accounts were made up, for the Year ended 31st Dec. 1856.	Articles chargeable with Duty, for the Year ended 31st Dec. 1856.
Tallow cwts.	1,124,843	1,016,309
Tar lasts	16,095	Free
Tea lbs.	86,159,517	63,295,727
Timber and wood:—		
Deals, battens, boards, or other timber or wood, sawn or split:—		
Of British Possessions loads	649,638	648,234
Foreign "	707,738	570,919
Staves "	82,181	Free
Timber, or wood, not being articles sawn, or split, or otherwise dressed, except hewn, and not otherwise charged with duty:—		
Of British Possessions loads	574,110	566,371
Foreign "	509,777	496,320
Tobacco, viz.:—		
Stemmed lbs.	13,279,122	15,618,478
Unstemmed "	31,509,008	16,711,253
Manufactured, and snuff "	1,855,104	249,256
Turpentine, common cwts.	215,872	Free
Watches:—		
Exceeding the value of £10 each no.	352	195
Not exceeding the value of £10 each "	89,723	82,969
Whale fins "	8,154	Free
Wine, viz.:—		
Of British Possessions in South Africa { Red galls.	223,188	191,732
{ White "	268,904	161,598
Of other British Possessions { Red "	465	469
{ White "	1,681	1,196
Foreign:—		
From Holland . { Red "	4,258	5,407
{ White "	106,955	84,662
" France . { Red "	435,945	382,278
{ White "	274,969	231,142
" Portugal { Red "	3,204,841	2,495,910
{ White "	79,219	62,197
Carried forward .	4,600,420	3,616,591

Articles.	Importations.	Quantities entered for Home Consumption.
	Quantities for which the Landing Accounts were made up, for the Year ended 31st Dec. 1856.	Articles chargeable with Duty, for the Year ended 31st Dec. 1856.
Brought forward . galls.	4,600,420	3,616,591
" Madeira { Red "	111	819
{ White "	85,389	40,807
" Spain . { Red "	74,766	28,346
{ White "	3,966,124	2,904,045
" Canaries { Red "	11	35
{ White "	24,220	6,890
" Naples & { Red "	509	1,025
Sicily . { White "	262,250	289,413
From other countries { Red "	213,883	101,061
{ White "	247,011	121,777
From various coun- { Red "	.	158,164
tries, mixed in bond { White "	.	96,518
Total of Wine . "	9,474,694	7,365,491
Wool: sheep and lambs':—		
From British Possessions out of		
Europe . . . lbs.	81,893,148	Free
From other parts . "	31,343,751	"
Total of sheep and lambs' wool "	113,236,899	
Alpaca and Llama tribe "	2,974,493	"
Woollen manufactures:—		
Manufactures not made up,		
value £	1,298,072	"
Articles or manufactures of wool		
wholly or in part made up:—		
Carpets and rugs . sq. yds.	48,648	48,371
Shawls, scarfs, and handkerchiefs. lbs.	20,973	20,537
Gloves . . . pairs	5,586	5,483
Other articles . . value £	14,891	10,412

GROSS RECEIPTS OF CUSTOMS ON THE PRINCIPAL
ARTICLES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER,
1856.

ARTICLES.	£
Butter	124,458
Cheese	49,492
Clocks	8,036
Cocoa	15,678
Coffee	586,764
Corn	488,724
Cotton manufactures, wholly or in part made up .	1,587
Eggs	19,566
Embroidery and needlework	12,324
Fruits	364,425
Glass manufactures	6,913
Lace and articles thereof	4,949
Leather manufactures	66,515
Linen manufactures, wholly or in part made up .	810
Opium	2,121
Rice	27,982
Silk manufactures of Europe	258,714
Silk manufactures of India	3,708
Spices	114,644
Spirits	2,560,459
Sugar, unrefined	5,183,677
Sugar, refined, candy, and molasses	471,955
Tallow	68,457
Tea	5,538,241
Timber	564,868
Tobacco	5,209,624
Watches	15,422
Wine	2,073,694
Woollen manufactures, wholly or in part made up .	2,234
Other articles	360,103
Total	<u>24,206,844</u>

EXCISE.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE QUANTITIES OF THE SEVERAL ARTICLES CHARGED WITH DUTIES OF EXCISE, THE QUANTITIES EXPORTED, AND THE QUANTITIES RETAINED FOR HOME CONSUMPTION, IN THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1856.

Articles.	Quantities charged with Duty.	Quantities Exported to Foreign Parts.	Quantities retained for Consumption in the United Kingdom.
<i>United Kingdom.</i>			
Hops . . . lbs.	55,868,624	1,565,249	54,303,375
Malt . . . bush.	36,980,041	212,274	36,970,427
Paper . . . lbs.	187,716,575	14,798,979	172,917,596
Spirits . . . galls.	23,922,453	4,956,150	23,300,556
Sugar (home made) . . . cwts.	750	.	750
Beer exported . barrls.	.	412,097	

It will be seen from the foregoing extracts from the official accounts that much of the old evil of protective duties is still continued; but on what principle of policy or justice these taxes on articles of food are retained it is impossible to imagine. It seems a mockery to take off the tax on bread, and to continue the tax on butter and cheese; the Customs' duty on butter being still 10s. per cwt. and 5 per cent.; and on cheese 5s. per cwt. and 5 per cent. It is demonstrable that the effect of these duties on butter and cheese is to raise the price of all the butter and cheese consumed in this country, whether of home or foreign growth, by at least the amount of those duties; and thus the consumer, even though he never use any of the foreign articles to which the tax is ostensibly limited, does in reality pay the tax, not to the State, but for the benefit of the home producers. Thus there are, in fact, protective

duties imposed upon the whole community for the advantage of one particular class, and that not the working agriculturists, whose interests are most strictly identified with the prosperity of commerce and industry, but of the owners of land, who are legislators.

The duties on commodities not produced in this country, whether levied by weight or measure, are equally objectionable in another way. Being precisely the same in amount, whatever the quality and price of the article, they, of course, press most heavily on the description of goods in general use; that is to say, on those used by the poor, and most lightly on those which are only accessible to the rich. Thus, whether the actual value of tea be 10*d.* or 6*s.* per lb., that of spirits 1*s.* or 10*s.* per gallon, that of tobacco 6*d.* or 5*s.* per lb., or that of wine 6*d.* or 10*s.* per bottle, the duties are in all cases the same, the poor paying several times over more per cent. than the rich. The effects are to limit consumption, to restrict trade, and often to prevent it altogether. For example, a paltry revenue of 25,981*l.* 7*s.* 11*d.* appears to have been extracted last year from figs. Now there is a description of figs, suitable for general consumption, and produced in large quantities, which, it is well known, might be imported and sold at 4*d.* per lb., but for the duty, which altogether excludes them from the market. A trade in this article, amounting to a large sum annually, might speedily be developed, but for this obstacle. Thus a lucrative branch of trade, a new opening to our manufactures, increased employment to the industrial classes, and the introduction of a cheap and wholesome fruit, are all prevented by an impolitic tax, which produces comparatively nothing to the State. This is but a sample, derived from one trifling article only, of the effects of the present short-sighted but most injurious system. Under this system, the working man, who

has nothing but his labour to depend upon, consumes individually of articles not produced in this country, such as coffee, sugar, and tea, as much as the rich man who is in the enjoyment of thousands of patrimonial acres, and, if he be in good health and constant employment, probably more. Thus he pays, through his stomach, at least as much as the rich man; and he also pays, indirectly, the protective duties on butter and cheese, which enhance the price of the rich man's produce at home, even though he never use an ounce of the things on which the duties are actually paid. Moreover, under this system, contribution to national necessities becomes, in defiance of every sound principle, a matter of choice or accident — the rich unmarried miser *need* not pay anything, the poor man with a large family *must* pay heavily.

On the poor, therefore, these taxes fall with peculiar hardship, while to the trade of the country, and thereby to the interests of the people in general, the loss is incalculably great, many articles of wholesome and nutritious food, and which to the poor would be cheap luxuries, being now altogether excluded from the market.

Thus many lucrative branches of trade, new openings for our manufactures, increased employment to the industrial classes, and the introduction of cheap and wholesome food, are all prevented by impolitic taxes, many of which produce comparatively nothing to the State, and which altogether cause a loss to the State incomparably greater than the whole revenue produced. Such are the effects of this short-sighted and most injurious system.

But these accounts exhibit some striking facts worthy of notice. The gross receipts from the Customs' duties for the year 1856 amounted to 24,206,844*l.*, whereas the totals for the years 1855 and 1854 were

but 22,615,708*l.* and 22,357,388*l.* respectively. Most persons are, no doubt, aware that the Customs' duties are levied on a great variety of articles, and that the proportions in which these articles contribute severally to the means of the country are extremely unequal. But the results which these figures present may not be so generally known.

The article yielding the greatest amount of revenue is sugar, after which comes tea, then tobacco. These three articles, which may be considered amongst the necessities of life in this country for the poor and working classes amounted, in gross, to 16,403,497*l.*; or, more than two-thirds of the whole amount of the Customs' duties for the year 1856. Spirits and wine next follow in amount, the former producing 2,560,459*l.*, the latter 2,073,684*l.*; making the revenue from these five articles 21,037,650*l.*

The next five articles in order of amount are, coffee, timber, corn and flour, fruits, and silk, producing 2,267,203*l.*, making the revenue from these ten articles 23,304,853*l.*, exceeding the whole revenue from the Customs' duties in 1855 by upwards of half a million, and in 1854 by nearly a million.

The next five articles in order of amount are, spices, butter, tallow, rice, cheese, producing 385,033*l.*, making the revenue from these fifteen articles 23,689,886*l.*; and if eggs and cocoa be added, producing 35,244*l.*, making the whole revenue from these seventeen articles 23,725,130*l.*, out of the gross revenue of 24,206,844*l.*, received from the Customs' duties for the year 1856.

But these official accounts present another remarkable view of arbitrary inconsistency and impolicy, in the mode of levying these Customs' duties on the articles entered for home consumption. Of the articles of human food imported for home consumption, take the following:—oxen, cows, calves, sheep, lambs, swine

and hogs, bacon, hams, beef salted and fresh, pork salted and fresh, poultry, lard, potatoes,—all these are free of duty.

But the following articles of human food, — viz. cocos, coffee, corn, and flour, currants, figs, lemons and oranges, raisins, rice, butter, cheese, eggs, spices, spirits, sugar, molasses, tea, tobacco, wine, — all these pay duty.

Of raw materials and manufactures, take the following:—raw cotton, cotton yarn, cotton manufactures, and other articles from India not made up, flax dressed and undressed, plate glass, and white flint glass goods not cut, engraved, or ornamented; hemp, hides tanned and untanned, linen manufactures, mahogany, metals, oil, oil seed cakes, quicksilver, saltpetre, seeds, silk, staves, tar, turpentine, whale fins, wool, woollen manufactures not made up,—all these are free of duty.

But the following raw materials and manufactures, — viz. cotton manufactures wholly or in part made up, embroidery and needle-work, window glass, shades and cylinders, and all flint-cut glass and fancy ornamental glass, lace and articles thereof, leather manufactures, linen manufactures wholly or in part made up, silk manufactures of Europe and of India, tallow, timber, woollen manufactures wholly or in part made up,—all these pay duty.

Of miscellaneous articles take the following:—ashes, pearl and pot, barilla and alkali, bark, bones of animals, brimstone, caoutchouc, cubic nitre, dyes, guano,—all these are free of duty.

But the following miscellaneous articles, — viz. clocks, watches, opium— all these pay duty.

In considering this revenue system, and its general operation upon commercial intercourse and public convenience, it is difficult to imagine any argument in support of this arbitrary, and inconsistent, mode of proceeding. It is perfectly easy to understand the doc-

trine under which the Customs' duties would be levied upon fifty articles rather than five, if the actual course of consumption admitted of the distribution; but if the odd forty-five be found in practice to return only an inappreciable proportion of the sum required, and furnished from this source of revenue, it is clear that the distribution is only imaginary, and that the five productive commodities might pretty nearly as well be taxed by themselves. But, while the revenue thus gains nothing by the multiplication of taxable articles not inviting consumption, it loses by the complication of system and procedure which this variety introduces, while many annoyances, small in themselves, but irritating to the national temperament, are likely to arise from the practice. What can be the use of bringing under the ken and gripe of the Custom-house, to the additional trouble of the officers, and the vexation of those who fall into their hands, all those numerous and harmless articles of foreign production, which are now found in the list of taxable articles, but which, for the revenue they produce, are wholly unworthy of notice?

It may be true that the amount of duty actually received upon an article affords no measure of the importation which might ensue if the tax were removed. But then the question is not one of revenue, but of protection. But in how many instances, in the list under review, would even this principle be applicable? An article of this kind would, or would not, be imported in larger quantities if the duty were removed; but, inasmuch as people will not, at any rate, pay the duty to get the article, the Exchequer would be as well off in either event, while the revenue system would be simplified by the abolition of a tax.

It used to be said that one great argument against the extension of direct taxation to small incomes was to be found in the fact that, beyond a certain point, the

plague was greater than the profit. The same may, certainly, be applied to Customs' duties, though the line may not be so easily traceable. How many officers, or how much of their time may be employed, for the sake of the odd half million, which makes the Customs' duties something over 24,000,000*l.*, instead of being something under it, may not be precisely said; but it is quite clear that there must be a point at which the importation and collection of a duty on articles of importation result in a loss, and equally so that this point must have been reached in many of the articles which return so comparatively small a sum between them.

There is also this other consequence attending high imports on merchandise injurious to the consumer. Every trader, through whose hands the commodity passes will have a profit, not only upon the raw material, and his own labour and time in preparing it, but also upon the very tax itself. If this were not the case, he would lose the interest of the money so paid. To instance the article of tea, the wholesale dealer pays a duty upon importation, which he does not receive again until he sells the commodity, perhaps at the end of three months. He must, therefore, take a profit as well upon the duty paid to the Custom-house, as upon the original price paid to the merchant who imports, and he charges the tea accordingly to the retail dealer. When the retail dealer sells it, he requires from the consumer a profit on the whole sum advanced by him to the wholesale dealer, and thus the consumer pays, not only the original duty, but also the profit of the intermediate traders who have successively advanced it for him.

This progressive increase is carried further in many mechanical, or more complicated, branches of trade. A heavy scale of Custom duties has also the effect, in

most cases, of causing the adoption of a corresponding scale of duties by foreign countries. And thus nations continue to act against their own interests, and the common good of all nations.

The second most important source of revenue, forming part of the *permanent* taxation of the country, is the duty of the Excise, or Inland revenue. The word "excise" is supposed to be derived from the Belgic "*acciiasse*," which signifies tribute; and it is an inland duty, or imposition, paid sometimes upon the consumption of the commodity, and frequently upon the wholesale, which is the last stage before the consumption; and the consumer, therefore, pays the profit of only one or two individuals upon the advance of the tax. But the rigorous and arbitrary nature of the Excise laws, and the power with which the officers are unavoidably invested, are quite incompatible with the institutions of a free nation. The frauds which might be committed in this branch of the revenue, unless a strict watch were kept, make it necessary to give the officers the power of entering and searching the houses of such as deal in exciseable commodities at every hour in the day, and, in many instances, in the night also; and the proceedings in cases of supposed transgressions are so summary, that the victim may be, and often is, convicted before he has had time to prepare his defence; and ruined, though innocent, by the oppressive costs of his defence. These cases are far too numerous to be here even referred to; but the following illustration of the oppressive character of the present Excise system, extracted from the proceedings of the London Insolvent Court, may suffice.

"On Monday, 22nd July, 1850, William Grimstone, the inventor of an herbaceous compound, known as 'Grimstone's Eye Snuff,' applied to be discharged. His debts were about 6000*l.*, and his credits 45*l.* The

insolvent, upon examination by Mr. Nicholls, stated that his present debts were the consequence of repeated prosecutions by the Government against him, for making and selling his snuff, which was entirely made from British herbs. The Government had tried to treat this snuff as an exciseable article, in the shape of tobacco; they prosecuted the insolvent in a manner that was calculated to cause the ruin of the insolvent, and not only of him, but also of all those who sold his manufacture. At last the Government consented to take a nominal verdict; but the costs which he had to pay were ruinous, amounting to 11,000*l*. He was first prosecuted in 1824, but obtained a letter of protection from the Earl Errol and Lord Liverpool, then in office. In 1827 he was again prosecuted by the Stamp Office, but, upon production of the letter of protection, he was allowed to continue his trade; and he went on until 1839, when Mr. Newberry, of St. Paul's Churchyard, employed Mr. Tyrrell to sue him; and, in 1845, the whole of his agents received an intimation that, if they continued to sell the 'Eye Snuff,' they would be prosecuted. Accordingly, in 1847, ninety-seven prosecutions were issued against them, notwithstanding the letter of the Treasury in 1824. The consequence was, that he had fifty or sixty agents every morning at his house with letters, demanding from him a fine of 40*l*., which they looked to him to arrange, and also to take back all his snuff, which he did from all his agents. Mr. Cooke said, that ninety writs were issued in one day against as many of the insolvent's agents, for an alleged violation of the Stamp Act, in vending the 'Eye Snuff.' The expenses were enormous, his trade was stopped, and the result was, his present difficulties. Insolvent stated that he was at one time advertising to the extent of 5000*l*. a year, and should have made

money, but for the vexatious proceedings of the Government. The further hearing of the case was postponed."

Of all duties, those of the Excise produce the greatest inconvenience to the subject, in comparison with the amount brought into the Exchequer. In other taxes the injury is measured chiefly by the amount taken from the pockets of the people; but in this the direct pecuniary charge forms one of the smallest parts of the evils which flow from it. It has been the means of introducing a system of espionage and restraint, more suited to Turkey than to England; and by interfering with the manufacturer in the processes of his art, it has forbidden improvement, and cramped industry. It has kept almost every article on which it has been imposed, to the same mode of manufacture which was in use at the time of its imposition, while, in almost everything else, innumerable improvements have been introduced. Those who deal in such articles are constantly exposed to the visitation of officers, who have it in their power almost to stop their trade, by compelling an exact adherence to all the vexatious and absurd rules which the Excise, or Inland Revenue Commissioners, as they are now called, have laid down, and the forbearance of these officers can only be purchased by constant subservience and occasional bribes, under the name of presents. But, of course, all this is charged eventually upon the consumer, who thus pays, not for the support of the state, but of the officers employed. If those who pay the taxes better understood the mystery and iniquity of the present system, and how, by the substitution of another system, no one should lose more in his individual capacity as a payer of taxes, than he would gain in his social capacity as a member of the state, it cannot be supposed that the present system would be much longer endured.

No. 3. — Page 27.

STAMPS.

Net produce of Tax for the Year ended 31st

March, 1856	£7,063,610	1	1
-------------	---	---	---	---	------------	---	---

The following is a list of the several taxes under this head: —

	£	s.	d.
Admiralty Stamps	8,357	11	2
Bankers' Notes	6,152	3	4
Bills of Exchange	444,599	10	8
Cards and Dice	12,327	8	0
Chancery Fund	11,993	0	7
Civil Fund	9,715	9	9
Composition for the Duties on the Bills and Notes of the Banks of England and Ireland, and of Country Bankers	57,722	6	11
Deeds and other Instruments	1,218,737	2	3
Gold and Silver Plate	63,562	0	8
Insurance, Marine	324,383	4	1
Insurance, Fire	1,280,441	19	3
Judgments Registry Fund	5,501	4	9
Law Fund	11,197	8	1
Legacies and Successions	1,699,346	17	10
Licences and Certificates	255,542	8	8
Medicines	38,289	4	9
Newspapers	201,258	6	0
Penalties and Costs recovered	5,325	10	5
Probate of Wills and Letters of Administration	1,151,526	9	3
Receipts and Drafts	257,630	14	8
	£7,063,610	1	1

These duties, though much less costly, in collection, than the Customs and Excise duties, and, of late years, much mitigated in severity, are still very unequal in

their operation ; and, in proportion to the amount of revenue raised, are scarcely less oppressive.

The history of the Stamp laws is remarkable, and also instructive, as to the manner in which taxes have been imposed upon the people.

The first, and, therefore, most memorable, Act of Parliament imposing Stamp duties, is the 5th and 6th William and Mary, c. 21, entitled " An Act for granting to their Majesties several duties upon vellum, parchment, and paper, for *four years*, towards carrying on the War against France."

The next Statute passed is the 9th and 10th William and Mary, c. 28, entitled " An Act for explaining and regulating several doubts, duties, and penalties, in the late Act for granting several duties upon vellum, parchment, and paper, *and for ascertaining the admeasurement of the tonnage of ships!*" The title to this Act is a mystification not to be misunderstood, having been too frequently resorted to, for the same purpose, in subsequent Acts of Parliament.

The Act immediately following is the 9th and 10th William the Third, c. 25. By this law, Stamp duties are imposed upon deeds, leases, and other documents, and also on legal proceedings.

Various Acts follow in the reign of Queen Anne, for regulating, and also for increasing, the various Stamp duties, until the reign of George the First, by which time stamps were required to be affixed to a great variety of documents, besides those charged with Stamp duties by the earlier Acts. The 1st George I., c. 12, constituted the Stamp duties a part of the aggregate fund, and in the same, and two following reigns, several other Acts were passed, down to the 23rd George III., c. 49, which may be considered the first modern Act upon the subject of the Stamp duties. This is the first Act charging bills of exchange and agreements with

Stamp duty, except a repealed Act, framed one year before, in 1782, by which bills of exchange and notes were first charged with Stamp duty.

The 23rd George III., had the effect of increasing most of the Stamp duties.

The 31st George III. next follows, imposing prohibitions and penalties of a most absurd and extravagant kind.

The 32nd George III., c. 51, entitled "An Act to exempt certain Letters, passing between Merchants or persons carrying on Trade or Commerce in the kingdom, containing agreements with respect to merchandise, notes, or bills of exchange, from the Stamp duty now imposed on written agreements."

This Statute deserves attention as affording a striking example of the wide-spread injury occasioned by the injudicious interposition of Stamp duties. After this Act follows one in the same reign, to relieve Friendly Societies from the operation of the Stamp laws; and many other Acts on various matters connected with the Stamp duties, relative to policies of insurances, probates of wills, newspapers, appraisements, and appraiser's licences, down to 48th George III., c. 149, an important Act which repeals, for the most part, the prior duties, but retains the *regulations* of the prior Acts, and introduces the notorious Stamp Act of 55th George III., c. 184.

This most disgraceful Act is entitled "An Act for repealing the Stamp Duties on Deeds, Law Proceedings, and other written or printed Instruments, and the Duties on Fire Insurances, and on Legacies, and Successions to Personal Estate, upon Intestacies now payable in Great Britain, and for granting other duties in lieu thereof."

Passing over the first six sections, relating principally to particulars of the *management* of the Stamp

duties, we come to the seventh, which makes the yielding to the temptation of evading the operation of this most disgraceful law, by forging stamps, using them twice, or transposing them, felony, punishable with death! and punishable with death these offences remained until the year 1830, when capital punishment was abolished in cases of forgery; and until the year 1833, when the other modes of evasion of the duties were made liable to imprisonment or transportation, for various terms of years, or for life, at the discretion of the Court!

The 37th section provides, that, if any person shall administer any part of the effects of any deceased person, without obtaining probate of the will of such deceased, or Letters of Administration to his effects, within six calendar months after the death, every person so offending shall forfeit 100*l.* and 10 per cent. on the amount of Stamp duty payable on the probate! When the manner in which this probate duty taxes the less wealthy part of the public is considered, the severity of this penalty will be more apparent.

The 43rd section imposes a penalty of similar amount on any executor who, on discovering that he has, by mistake, paid too little duty, shall not pay the proper amount in addition, within six calendar months after discovering his error.

The 54th section contains the noble, but strangely considerate provision, "That nothing in this, or any other Act, shall extend, or be construed to extend, to charge with any Stamp duties, *ginger* and *peppermint* lozenges, or any other kind of confectionery, unless the person vending the same shall vend the same as medicines, or as beneficial for the prevention, cure, or relief of any distemper, malady, ailment, or disorder, incident to, or in anywise affecting, the human body; *then* a Stamp tax is paid."

The schedule to this Act is divided into three parts :

“ Part the First, containing the duties on admission to offices, &c., on instruments of conveyance, contract, obligation, and security for money, on deeds in general, and on other instruments, matters, and things not falling under either of the following heads.”

“ Part the Second, containing the duties on Law Proceedings, or proceedings in the Admiralty and Ecclesiastical Courts, and in the several Courts of Law and Equity at Westminster, and other Courts in Great Britain, and in the offices belonging thereto, and before the Lord High Chancellor, or the Lord Keeper, or Commissioners for the Custody of the Great Seal, in the matters of bankruptcy and lunacy.”

“ Part the Third, containing the duties on probates of Wills, and Letters of Administration, on Confirmation of Testaments, testamentary and dative, on Inventories to be exhibited in the Commissary Courts of Scotland, on legacies out of real or personal heritable or moveable estate ; and on successions to personal or moveable estates upon intestacy.”

The partial and unjust working of this Act is manifest by merely a careful inspection of the schedule itself, accompanied by a few arithmetical calculations ; but the immense loss and inconvenience to the public by the manner of imposing these duties, is hidden, not only from ordinary observation, but from all observation whatsoever, except that of persons much experienced in the matter, a loss and inconvenience falling with greater severity, as people are less able to bear it.

The only principle which appears to have been kept in view by the framers of the schedule to this Stamp Act is, to load small transactions with a heavy amount of duty, and keep large ones, comparatively speaking, nearly exempt. In other words, the wealthy shield themselves from the payment of their fair proportion of

this tax, at the expense of the middle and lower classes of society, in a great number of cases, in a manner the most open and notorious, and in many other cases in a manner not less flagitious, though less open and notorious.

Fortunately for the country, many of these cases have been mitigated in severity and inequality, by Acts passed in the present reign, but particularly by the Act 13 and 14 Vic., c. 97, which materially alters, by reducing, the duties on agreements, bonds, conveyances, leases, memorials, mortgages, settlements, and warrants of attorney, and abolishes the lease for a year duty. But this Act, absurdly enough, increases the penalty payable on stamping deeds, after execution, to Ten Pounds, and, in some cases, 5*l.* per cent. interest on the amount of duty, in addition to such penalty.

The 16 & 17 Vic., c. 59, alters the duties on indentures of apprenticeship, where no premium is paid; or debentures for procuring drawback of customs, &c., drafts, policies on lives, and receipts; and enacts that counterparts of leases signed by the lessee only, do not require the denoting stamp applicable to duplicates. C. 63, repeals the advertisement duty, and reduces the duties on articles of clerkship, and attorneys' certificates.

The 17 & 18 Vic., c. 83, alters the duties on bills of exchange and promissory notes; leases for terms exceeding 35 years; conveyances in consideration of perpetual rent charges; and licences to demise copyholds.

Of all subsisting Stamp duties the most obnoxious, oppressive, and impolitic, are the following:—

1. On Probates and Letters of Administration.
2. „ Legacies and Successions.
3. „ Fire and Marine Insurances.
4. „ Deeds and other Instruments.
5. „ Licences and Certificates.
6. „ Medicines.

1. PROBATES AND LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION	£1,151,526	9	3
2. LEGACIES AND SUCCESSIONS	1,699,346	17	10

Probate duty is a tax paid by the personal representatives of deceased persons upon the gross amount of the personal property left to their descendants.

Probate duty is an *ad valorem* duty; that is, an *ad valorem* in the usual Stamp law acceptation of the term.

Legacy duty is graduated according to the relationship of the legatee to the deceased.

Legacy, and succession duty is a tax *over and above* the probate duty, paid by the persons who succeed to the property of the deceased, with the exceptions of the husband, or wife, who pay no legacy duty. Probate duty must always be paid.

By a strange, and double anomaly, probate duty is not payable upon freehold, or copyhold estates; though, when these are devised to be sold, the legacy duty is then payable, though the probate duty is not.

Administration duty is in all respects similar to the probate duty, though the scale of duty is higher—by way of penalty on the property of the deceased for dying without making a will!

The whole arrangement is insultingly prejudicial to the poorer classes, and odiously partial in its operation.

It would be impossible here to point out the innumerable cases of peculiar injustice and oppression from this tax. It comes into operation, generally, in the time of affliction, and too often it falls upon the bereaved at a time when they are least able to meet the demand, having just lost their chief means of support. It is a tax which takes away from the family, or friends, of the deceased, a large proportion of his property, in consequence of, and immediately after, his death, and by

means the most peremptory, exacting, and oppressive ; demanding an inventory and valuation of all his personal property, and effects, and the consequent exposure of all his private affairs ; the balance at his bankers ; the loose cash in his house ; his rooms and store-closets are rifled for an account of his books, plate, linen, and china, and even his ward-robe for his wearing apparel ; his cellars for his beer and wine ; his coach-house and his stables for his carriages and horses ; and all these painful inquisitions are imposed by this disgraceful law at a time when most severely felt. Nor is this the worst.

To comply with all the complex requisitions of the law on these occasions, renders the assistance of the attorney necessary in most cases, and to him, consequently, all the private affairs of the deceased, even to the minutest particulars, must, unavoidably, be exposed. Another consequence, equally unavoidable, is the payment of his bill of costs—seldom less, and often much more, in amount, than 10 per cent. upon the tax paid ; and fortunate is the case, if the account of the executor, with the Stamp Office, be, at last, finally closed, without question, or some monstrous exaction, or Exchequer suit.

The only justification for these taxes is the plea of necessity. That plea might be good if it were true ; but it is notoriously untrue. But the injustice and oppression of these taxes is not all that is to be urged against them, nor, perhaps, the worst. The law which imposes these taxes, like every other unjust and oppressive law, is evaded, and to an extent of which the public in general have little conception. It was an admission once made to the writer by a gentleman, then holding a high and confidential position in the Legacy Duty department of the Stamp Office, as a fact well known to the Commissioners, that if the duties payable

by law on probates, legacies, and residues were duly paid, the national debt of this country might long ago have been paid off! Through the long series of years during which these unjust and oppressive duties have been imposed upon the people, it may be safely asserted that not one executorship account has been justly rendered and paid in strict accordance with the provisions of these Acts of Parliament. And yet all these accounts have been made out, delivered, and paid on the faith of a solemn oath. What further comment need be made on such a system of legislation as this,—of oppressive and unjust laws, which are mitigated in their severity only by the evasions of perjury!

By a recent change of the law, succession to real estate is subject to the same scale of duty as succession to personal estate, and thus the absurd anomaly of the unjust distinction, so long continued, between real and personal estate for the purpose of taxation is removed.

But though that absurd and unjust inequality is removed, the oppressiveness of this tax is now, or soon will be, made more manifest. Landed proprietors have not yet felt the full force of this tax; but, when it comes into full operation, it will be found to be unbearable, and that it will, in many cases, amount, practically, to confiscation. That landed proprietors submitted to this tax in ignorance of its effect, and as a kind of compromise for Sir Robert Peel's tariff and income tax, is well known. But the principle on which that compromise was made was radically wrong; and, sooner or later, the error will be more generally seen and acknowledged, and *then* all these obnoxious and unjust taxes must be swept away. To hasten that happy advent is the present object.

3. MARINE INSURANCES	.	.	£ 324,383	4	1
FIRE INSURANCES	.	.	1,280,441	19	3
<hr/>					

These are taxes on prudence, and are an insult to the understanding. Not even the desperate plea of necessity can be ventured on in defence of these impositions. Nor is that the plea advanced.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his last financial statement (1857), says, in reference to fire insurances: "The result of a careful consideration of the question has been to convince me that it is a duty which falls exclusively upon realised property;—that it is a duty which adapts itself with singular felicity to the circumstances of the tax-payer, which is heaviest when the insurance is lightest, and lightest when the insurance is heaviest . . . and, so far as I am able to judge, I believe it to be one of the last duties which ought to be relinquished."

It is true that this is a duty which falls exclusively upon realised property, but the antithesis which follows is singularly infelicitous; for, if it were otherwise, the tax would be prohibitory and, therefore, unproductive.

It would be more correct to say that this is a tax which presses the heaviest on the most prudent, and the lightest on the least prudent.

But it is not true, as the advocates of the tax assert, that the outlay for insurance is voluntary; the fact being, in most cases of tenancy, that the insurance is at first a compulsory tax imposed on the tenant for the benefit of the landlord; and it is rather too bad that tenants should be compelled by their landlords to insure, and for every 5*l.* so paid for the value of the risk, should be compelled to pay 10*l.* to Government for the tax.

The duties on marine insurances are fixed on a scale according to the rate per cent. of the premium on the sum insured.

If not exceeding 10s. per cent. on the sum insured				. 3d.
Exceeding 10s. per cent., and not exceeding 20s.				. 6d.
"	20s.	"	"	30s. . 1s.
"	30s.	"	"	40s. . 2s.
"	40s.	"	"	50s. . 3s.
Exceeding the rate of 50 per cent. on the sum insured				. 4s.

The stamp duty on a policy of fire insurance has, since the year 1804, stood unchanged at 1s., and, since 1815, at the per-centage duty of 3s. for every 100*l*. of the sum insured; except on agricultural produce, farming-stock, and implements of husbandry, which, by Act 3 & 4 Wm. IV., c. 23, s. 5 (1833), are exempt.

Now, considering that the premium, or payment, required for the insurance itself amounts, in cases of ordinary hazard, to only 1s. 6*d*. for every 100*l*. insured, it follows that every man insuring his property on these terms, after paying the whole sum demanded by the insurance office, pays twice as much more in the shape of a tax to the exchequer.

As 1s. 6*d*. per cent. is found by experience to be a remunerative premium to the office, an additional charge of 3s. per cent. in the shape of a Government duty, represents a tax of 200 per cent. on the article. But it is not every species of property which can be insured at 1s. 6*d*. in the 100*l*. The premium per cent. is 4s. on agricultural stock, 3*s*. on certain mercantile stocks, 3 guineas on property involving special risks, and generally 5 guineas on theatres, or other like risks. Now, as the duty in every case remains the same, it follows that in all the more costly examples of insurance it bears a smaller proportion to the premium, until, in the extreme instance of the theatres, its pro-

portion to the premium, instead of being 200 per cent., is less than 3 per cent. It is, therefore, said, in commendation of the tax, that it "adapted itself with singular facility to the circumstances of the taxpayer," being "heaviest when the insurance was lightest, and lightest when the insurance was heaviest." However, in a case like this, the only way of proceeding is to strike an average, and then, taking one case with another, the duty and premium are just about equal; that is to say, the tax on the article, though not 200 per cent., is cent. per cent. So much for the rate.

But, on the moral bearing of the question, it cannot be denied that, as the act of insuring is a prudent one, the tax upon it must, according to its amount, be an obstacle to prudence.

Property which may have been realised by the owner by many years of industry, enterprise, thrift, and self-denial, and which, at every step in the process, may have been very sensibly diminished by direct taxation, is very likely to impress the owner with a desire to preserve it from the risk of sudden destruction, and, therefore, if he be prudent, he insures it.

But it seems to be a singularly infelicitous commendation of the tax to say that it "adapted itself with singular felicity to the circumstances of the taxpayer," who is thus paying for the protection of his property, 100 per cent. beyond the value of the risk, in addition to all the taxation which that property has borne whilst in the process of being realised! If property be, indeed, the result of prudence, and if this prudence have already been sharply taxed at every successive stage of its exertions, it might surely plead for some exemption when its object has been at last obtained. If a man have been taxed at every step of his toil, and have, nevertheless, in spite of this taxation, realised a little bit of property, it seems the strangest of all arguments to

urge, that, considering the impediments previously placed in his way, he cannot reasonably object to some obstacle being interposed when he wishes to secure his savings. Very likely the duty on fire insurances is small in comparison with other taxes; but as long as this tax is seen to amount to as much as the whole cost of the insurance itself, its proportions will infallibly create discontent.

It may be very proper to tax realised property; but this is a tax, not upon all property, but only upon property which is insured. Negligent or imprudent owners may escape it altogether; and very large proprietors may, and often do, elude it by becoming their own insurers. Why, moreover, if the duty be only a form of direct taxation, should it be levied upon property, such as house property, which has already paid its own duty of this very kind?

The Report on Fire Insurance Duties, addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and lately printed by the House of Commons (1857) seems to have been specially prepared to support the peculiar, and, as many think, the erroneous, views of that right honourable gentleman on this subject.

The Report, after detailing the facts, lays down the following as "inevitable deductions:" —

- "1. That before this tax was laid on fire insurance, and while the practice of insurance was forming, and while it might have been expected to make the most rapid comparative progress, starting from zero, the concurrent progress of the wealth of the country being so far without a parallel in our history, the actual rate of progress of the practice was the least. Unfettered by this duty, the rate of progress in the insurance of pro-

- perty from loss by fire did certainly not reach the amount of 3 millions a year.
- “2. That at the intermediate rates of this duty, from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.*, the rate of increase of the practice of fire insurance was comparatively rapid, the property insured rising in the thirty-three years after 1782 from 173 to 360 millions, at an average annual rate of increase of 5 $\frac{1}{3}$ millions.
- “3. That in the forty years during which this duty has been at its highest, the rate of increase in the amount of property insured has also been the greatest, namely, from 384 to 864 millions, an average annual rate of increase of 11 $\frac{1}{3}$ millions.
- “4. That at the present time, judging by the regular progress of the last five years, the rate of progress is the highest of which we have any record, being at an average annual rate of increase of 18 $\frac{1}{3}$ millions.”

Admitting these deductions, what is to be inferred from these facts?

The Report proceeds to say:—“All that is to be inferred from them is, that the causes which have led to the increase of insurance were not so operative before this tax was imposed as they have been since, and that this tax cannot be shown to have impeded the operation of the causes in the manner that is assumed by those who purpose to abolish or reduce the tax, on the alleged ground that it is a grave obstacle to the prudent practice of insurance.”

But many may, and do, draw a very different inference from these facts, and say that the practice of fire insurance has increased *in spite of* increased taxation; and they may very reasonably infer, as they do, that

the increase of fire insurance would have been much greater if there had been no tax; and that, if it were otherwise, the inference must be that increase of taxation has actually operated to increase insurance.

This seems to be so obvious, that the question might be safely left here, and would be, but that the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his Report may be considered entitled to something more of deferential respect.

It is admitted, and assumed as a fact, in the argument throughout the Report, that "The entire average of the whole insurance now effected, subject to duty, appears to be at about 3*s.* per 100*l.*, on which the duty is about 100 per cent. on the premium." Also, "That the risk of loss by fire is such that an insurance against it for the space of a year can be made, with a fair profit to the insurer, for a premium of 1*s.* 6*d.* on the 100*l.* worth of property insured, and that this being the natural cost price of the insurance, the duty of 3*s.* per 100*l.* is an enhancement of the price by 200 per cent."

Now, on these facts, to infer "that this tax cannot be shown to have impeded the practice of insurance," or to deny "that it is a grave obstacle to the prudent practice of insurance," it seems necessary only to state thus plainly the position of the question, to show, with all due respect to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his Report, that there must be some fallacy in the reasoning which leads to such a conclusion. To show precisely where the fallacy lies, it would be necessary to follow the Report through all its details, which would require more space than can be here spared for such a purpose, and would be as tedious as unprofitable to the reader. But if the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself be a believer in the accuracy of the reasoning which leads to this conclusion, which it is scarcely possible to imagine, and if he be really in favour of retain-

ing the present duty on such ground, on what ground does he maintain the present useless *exemption* of agricultural insurances?

In the debate in the House of Commons on the Chancellor of the Exchequer's "Financial Statement" on Friday, the 13th of February, 1857, as reported in *The Times*, it was stated as a fact by Mr. Alcock, and was uncontradicted, that "in France seven-eighths of all the property was insured against fire, while in England one-third was so insured." If this be the fact, it is expressive of the effect of this tax on prudence, there being no such tax in France; and many will think this fact more to the purpose than all the reasoning of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and his Report, on this question.

Many will continue to think this a most unfair and impolitic tax; and it is the duty of all who think so to insist on its removal, and to continue so to insist until it is removed.

The exemption of farming property from both the duties on fire insurance was granted in 1833. This exemption was obtained under circumstances which had, for some years previously, irresistibly compelled the attention of agriculturists to the protection afforded them by fire insurance.

Agrarian incendiarism, remembered as the "Swing Fires," had prevailed for three or four years very extensively in the southern countries, and sufficiently in other parts of the country to spread alarm universally; and, at the same time that terror compelled the farmers to insure their property, had raised the cost of insurance in the counties where this incendiarism prevailed to two, three, or four times the former rates. To relieve the farmer from the hardships to which he was peculiarly exposed, as well as to frustrate the object of the incendiary, which was to terrify, not insurance com-

panies, but farmers, landlords, and the rural population, this exemption from both the duties—the stamp duty on the policy, and the duty on the insurance—was granted.

It was quite impossible for any farmer to be ignorant of the facts, or uninformed as to the extent of the peculiar benefit to him of the remission of duty, or of the value of the protection involved in the practice of fire insurance; and occasional reports of incendiarism, raised truly or falsely from time to time, have been raised to recall these benefits in a peculiar manner to the farmer's mind. But immediately after the exemption was granted, and, indeed, in many cases in anticipation of it, another active stimulus was applied to farmers in the addresses of county members, and in the remarks especially of the provincial press, pointing out to them the value of the privilege they had obtained.

Numerous agents of insurance companies were appointed in country and market towns, expressly to take advantage of the new field of business supposed to be opened. The insurance companies universally entered upon a losing competition, reducing their rates of premium on agricultural insurances from 5s. to 1s. 9d., that is, by about two-thirds of their previous amount, from which reduction they have been obliged, by the losses they have incurred, to return at length (in 1856) to a minimum rate of 4s., having, in the mean time, stimulated agricultural insurance at the cost, or by sacrifice of the profits, of all other insurances, by an artificial bounty in the shape of a reduction of premiums, below the fair cost price of insurance, by from sixty-six to fifty-six per cent. Further, as a permanent cause of increase of agricultural insurance, there has been a great improvement in the processes of agriculture, in the adoption of valuable implements of husbandry, and in the weight and value of crops—improvements in the value of agricultural stock, which very much exceed those of

the majority of the other trades of the country in the same period of time. All these influences have been, at least, as favourable to the increase of the amount of insurance of farming stock as any that have affected the other insurable property of the country, and some of the most influential, and all the factitious stimulus has operated on it exclusively; and, perhaps, bearing in mind the various causes which, from year to year, diminish the destructible, or insurable, value of houses and buildings, and the stocks kept in hand in all other businesses of production and trade, while agriculture is the single business in which the stock in hand, at some time in the year, has almost invariably increased, these considerations may seem to be, of themselves, more than sufficient to account for the increase, in twenty-four years, in the value of farming-stock insured beyond the rate of increase of insurance on all other property.

It must, at all events, be allowed that the absolute exemption of farming-stock from this duty, for twenty-four years, is an experiment which is of more decisive value than any mere speculation as to the probable effects of remission, or exemption, of other property from this duty.

Here some important facts are deserving of observation, namely, the rapid increase in the insurance of farming-stock in the first twelve years of its exemption from duty; and that since the artificial stimulus offered to agricultural insurance by the alarm caused by "Swing Fires," and especially by the destructive competition of the insurance companies, had been diminished or withdrawn, the rate of increase in the insurance of this description of property, in comparison with the insurance of all other property, had diminished in proportion; and, consequently, that the insurance of farming-stock afterwards made gradually a less and less proportionate progress, as compared with all other

property bearing the full burden of both duties, and is now remaining stationary, or nearly so; seeming thus to prove that the increase in the insurance of farming-stock is wholly attributable to the exemption from duty; instead of proving, as stated in the Report, "that the apparent gain was wholly fictitious, and illusory."

We have no exact information as to the value of property insured under the denomination of farming-stock before the year 1833-1834. But, commencing with the first year in which we have exact information of the value of farming-stock insured, in 1834, it was $37\frac{1}{4}$ millions sterling. In 1856 it had risen to $62\frac{1}{2}$ millions—a rise in 22 years of $67\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

Assuming these to be the facts, as stated in the report, this is the rate of increase of a species of property favoured with a total exemption of duty.

Now, comparing this increase of insurance with that of property which, during all this same time, has remained subject to the full duty; and assuming, as the Report does, that the total amount of this latter property insured in 1834, was $483\frac{9}{10}$ millions, and in 1856, $802\frac{1}{2}$ millions; the increase in the same 22 years was $65\frac{2}{6}$ per cent.

On these facts the Report proceeds to say that, "The result of the comparison is, that the exempted property has, in 22 years, increased $1\frac{4}{10}$ per cent. more than the property which has all that time remained subject to the tax."

Now, if the Report had stated the result of such comparison to be, that the exempted property had in 22 years increased $1\frac{4}{10}$ per cent. more than the property *insured*, which had all that time remained subject to the tax,—that such was the result, would not have been disputed.

But that would not have answered the purpose of the Report; which was, to make it appear, from this

trifling difference, to how small an extent this tax operated to discourage insurance.

But if the amount of property insured in 1856, subjected to the duty, and stated to be $802\frac{1}{2}$ millions, be taken to represent only one-third of the insurable property of the kingdom, exclusively of the exempted property, and which is notoriously very much below the actual value, then this result is entirely reversed, and the conclusion must be, that the duty operates as a tax on prudence; and that, but for this tax, the amount of property insured, exclusively of property now exempted, would have been, in 1856, at least double the amount actually insured. Such is the fair inference from the facts assumed; and this conclusion seems to be more in conformity with common sense, than the assumption that a tax of 100 per cent. is no serious obstacle to the prudent practice of insurance.

It is true that any estimate of the amount of insurable property must be a very open question; but, if it be assumed that the amount of property exempted from the duty on insurance is fairly represented by the amount insured, the same assumption with respect to property subjected to the duty, must be most erroneous and fallacious. This is the fallacy which leads to the monstrous conclusion, already shown, in the Report. If it may be assumed that all the farming-stock in the kingdom is insured, the cost of the insurance being no more than the fair value of the risk, this must surely be a most unwarrantable assumption when applied to all other insurable property, the cost of insuring which is 100 per cent. or 200 per cent. more than the fair value of the risk. But this is the unwarrantable assumption on which the Report in question proceeds, and on which it disposes of the objection to the duty, as a "Tax on produce," by the simple assertion that this "objection is, in truth, merely rhetorical." It is to be hoped the

people will convince the Chancellor of the Exchequer that they consider this objection to be something more than a mere figure of speech.

That the old-established insurance offices are well satisfied with the present state of things with regard to insurances, will, probably, afford but little satisfaction to the public at large. It is generally those who seek to establish, or enlarge, an insurance business, who view these duties as an obstacle, and represent them as favouring monopoly, and as inimical to the practice of insurance. Most of the companies, on the other hand, which are well-established, and in possession of good business, appear to be content with the operation of the duties. In fact, these duties do constitute an obstacle to the one class, and a facility to the other.

The allowance on the payment of the duties of four per cent. in London, and five per cent. in the country, for the collection, and prompt payment, is to these companies who can pay the duty within the quarter, a source of profit, which neither appears to be added to their customers' premiums, nor abstracted from their own revenue. On the whole, it is such a sum as enables every company with a large business to pay the cost of their country agency, an indispensable means of success to every Fire Insurance Company.

A less duty, involving a proportionally less discount, or no duty at all, would, according to their evidence, compel the companies to raise their premiums, or to encroach on their present rate of profits. They, therefore, find the present system a convenience and facilitation of their business.

But this advantage to established companies is, relatively, a disadvantage to new ones, who, till they have acquired a sufficient business to pay their agency by this discount, must be contented with an inferior agency, or provide for an efficient one out of capital or pre-

miums. Still this would be no objection to new enterprises, commenced with sufficient *bonâ fide* capital, the expense of working through this period being a legitimate application of that capital, and a just foundation of future profits. The effectual restraint is upon speculative enterprises, started without sufficient capital to make these advances; and the present system of duty and discount is, therefore, looked on by most of the existing companies as a beneficial check upon merely speculative enterprises, and some security to the public that a company undertaking insurance has the command at least of some of the necessary capital.

No assistance, therefore, is to be expected by the public from any of the established companies, either for a reduction or for the removal of the present duties. With regard to their evidence, that a reduction, or the removal, of the present duties would compel the companies to raise their premiums, or to encroach on their present rate of profits, that, the public will readily perceive, is quite undeserving of their attention; as, in the former of these alternatives, the public interest would be effectually protected by the public competition; and, in the latter, the public are in no way concerned.

And now to conclude these remarks with a few observations addressed to the people, for the purpose of showing them, or such of them as are free to act for themselves, how they may take this subject into their own hands, and turn it to their own advantage.

It is well known that all the old-established fire insurance companies are very profitable concerns, and that though their profits are dependent on what are called *chances*, yet that these chances are so calculated as to reduce the result pretty nearly to a *certainty*. The premium paid to a company for insurance against fire is based on an experience of losses, of which one-half are supposed to be fraudulent, and half of which premium

is absorbed in the expenses and the profits of the company. Fifty per cent. of the premium of fire insurance, laid by or invested, would be, to most persons, an ample self-insurance, by which they would save as much again in premium, and, on common risks, four times as much in duty.

This view, if generally carried out in practice, would soon settle the question of fire insurance duties, and at the same time wind up all the fire insurance companies in the kingdom, and save an incalculable amount of fires and frauds, to say nothing of the saving of life and property. In that case the fire brigade would have to be placed on a different footing from the present, but need not be in any manner less efficient than at present.

But long before the necessity for the abandonment of the present system became apparent, these obnoxious duties would be abandoned as unjust, immoral, and impolitic.

4. DEEDS AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS . £1,218,737 2 3

The stamp duties on deeds and other instruments are an unjust, oppressive, and impolitic tax ; falling with unequal weight on different descriptions of property, and most heavily on real property, besides interposing additional delay, vexation, and expense on the transfer of property generally. Moreover, it is a tax peculiarly open to frauds and evasions which can be prevented only partially, and then only by a system of extreme severity, enforced by heavy penalties, which in numberless cases operate with the greatest injustice.

This is a tax also which, in numerous cases, falls on the party least able to bear it, as in all mortgages, bonds, and other securities.

But as a vexatious impediment, and additional expense, on the transfer of property which ought to be as freely disposed of as government stock, exchequer bills, or any other description of personal property, this tax is not to be supported on any sound principle of policy, and ought therefore to be abolished.

5. LICENSES AND CERTIFICATES . . . £255,542 8 8

These are invidious, unequal, and, therefore, unjust taxes on particular classes, operating in many ways very injuriously, and producing an amount of revenue altogether contemptible; and, therefore, ought to be abolished.

6. MEDICINES . . . £38,289 4 9

This is another instance of a vicious and absurd tax, being a tax on what are called patent, or quack, medicines; but on what principle it is impossible to imagine, for if on one sort of medicines, why not on all sorts?

If the object be the protection of the public health, then the tax should be prohibitory. But if many of these patent medicines afford relief in certain maladies, as is supposed, then this tax is no less cruel than absurd.

But the principal payers of this tax are the poorer classes, who, not having the means of resorting, on every occasion, to the regular physician, and his orthodox remedies, seek that relief which is promised to them in the daily repeated advertisements which meet their eyes in every newspaper throughout the kingdom.

No. 4 — Page 28.

ASSESSED TAXES.

Net produce of these Taxes for the Year
ended 31st March, 1856 . . . £1,978,552 5 9

The following is a list of the several taxes under
this head : —

	£	s.	d.
1. Armorial Bearings	53,748	0	0
2. Carriages	283,853	0	0
3. Composition Duty	5,828	0	0
4. Dogs	208,912	0	0
5. Game Duty	125,364	8	3
6. Hair Powder	1,404	0	0
7. Horse Dealers	13,818	0	0
8. Horses	340,898	0	0
9. Inhabited Houses	728,688	18	0
10. Servants	185,826	0	0
11. Additional 10 per Cent.	11,912	0	0
12. Penalties and Costs recovered	376	14	3
13. Produce of the Stock of the Surveyors' Fund	17,923	5	3
	<u>£1,978,552</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>9</u>

All these may be taken, collectively, as arbitrary, inconsistent, and vexatious; many of them being obstructions to the healthy enjoyment of the people, and to the trade and industry of the country, and all being unnecessary and impolitic.

1. Armorial bearings.—Persons using armorial bearings, and being chargeable with duty for any carriage at the rate of 3*l.* 10*s.* — 2*l.* 12*s.*

Persons not so chargeable, 13*s.* 2*d.*

2. Carriages.—If drawn by two or more horses or mules, 3*l.* 10*s.* If by one horse or mule, 2*l.*

For every carriage with four wheels, each of less diameter than thirty inches, if drawn by two or more ponies or mules, neither exceeding thirteen hands high, 1*l.* 15*s.* If by one such pony or mule, 1*l.*

For every carriage with less than four wheels, if drawn by two or more horses or mules, 2*l.* If by one horse or mule, 15*s.* If by one pony or mule, not exceeding thirteen hands high, 10*s.*

Carriages kept solely for the purpose of being let to hire, one-half of the above-mentioned duties respectively.

For every carriage used by any common carrier, principally for carrying goods, but occasionally passengers, in such manner that no stage carriage duty shall be payable, if with four wheels, 2*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* Less than four wheels, 1*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*, with certain exemptions.

3. Composition duty.—This is a duty paid only by those who are rich enough to avail themselves of an authorised evasion of these taxes.

4. Dogs.—For every dog, 12*s.* With a proviso (introduced by fox-hunting and sporting legislators), that no person shall be chargeable with more duty than 39*l.* 12*s.* for any number of hounds, or 9*l.* for any number of greyhounds.

And another proviso (introduced by land-owning legislators), exempting dogs wholly kept and used in the care of sheep or cattle.

5. Game duty.—On a gamekeeper acting under a deputation, if assessed as a servant, 1*l.* 5*s.* If not so assessed, 3*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.* On every other person using dog or gun, net or engine, for the taking or killing of game, 3*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.*

By 1 & 2 William IV., c. 32, persons licensed to deal in game are to take out a certificate charged with

a duty of 2*l.*; but certified persons may sell game to licensed dealers if paying a duty of 3*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.*

The penalty for selling game (not being duly licensed) is 5*l.*; and this penalty is also incurred by the *buyer* of game from an unlicensed person.

6. Hair powder.—Persons wearing or using hair powder, 1*l.* 3*s.* 6*d.*!

7. Horse dealers.—Every person exercising the business of a horse dealer *within* the bills of mortality, 25*l.* But if *without*, 12*l.* 10*s.*!

8. Horses.—For every race-horse, 3*l.* 17*s.*

By 19 & 20 Vic., c. 82, this is made a duty of Excise.

For every other horse, and every mule, exceeding thirteen hands high, kept for riding or drawing carriages, 1*l.* 1*s.*

For every other horse or mule, exceeding thirteen hands high, 10*s.* 6*d.*

For every pony or mule, not exceeding thirteen hands, kept for riding or drawing any carriage liable to duty, 10*s.* 6*d.* If kept for any other purpose, 5*s.* 3*d.*

Clergymen, dissenting ministers, Roman Catholic priests, and physicians, surgeons, and apothecaries, duly qualified, may keep one *riding* horse at the duty of 10*s.* 6*d.* only, if only one be kept.

Persons occupying farms may keep one riding horse at the duty of 10*s.* 6*d.* only, but every such person must gain his livelihood principally by farming.

Persons keeping one horse only, to be ridden by bailiffs, shepherds, or herdsmen, are to be charged 10*s.* 6*d.* only.

Horses belonging to the Royal Family are exempted. Also horses used in stage carriages, horses let to hire by licensed persons, used in hackney carriages, or kept by horse dealers. Also horses used by market gardeners solely in their business, husbandry horses oc-

casionally used in drawing burdens, or let for drawing for hire or profit, if not used for drawing any carriage chargeable with duty.

9. Inhabited houses. — For every inhabited dwelling-house which, with the offices, yards, and gardens therewith occupied and charged, shall be worth the rent of 20*l.* or upwards per annum, if occupied by any person in trade; or if a farm-house, occupied by a tenant or farm servant for the purposes of husbandry only, there shall be charged for every 20*s.* of such annual value the sum of 6*d.*

And for every dwelling-house not so occupied and used, there shall be charged for every 20*s.* of such annual value the sum of 9*d.*

10. Servants. — For every male servant of the age of eighteen years, or upwards, 1*l.* 1*s.* And for every servant under that age, 10*s.*

These duties extend to all male servants, by whatever name called, including waiters, gardeners, game-keepers, &c., with certain exemptions.

11. Additional 10 per cent. This additional tax was put on many years ago by 3 Vic., c. 17, s. 8, as a *temporary* aid; but when to be taken off, does not appear.

12. Penalties and costs recovered. Of this sum of 376*l.* 14*s.* 3*d.*, no particulars, or means of check, are given; and, therefore, nothing further can be said of this than, if this be all, it is very small.

13. Produce of the stock of the surveyors' fund.

Of this no inconsiderable sum of 17,923*l.* 5*s.* 3*d.*, no particulars being given, nothing can be said.

Such is the bill of costs charged yearly on the nation, under the name of Assessed Taxes.

The uncertainty, inconvenience, and oppression of those duties regulated by the varying size and number of wheels, and the size of the horses, are well understood

by all those who have had business, or pleasure, with them in public, or private.

Now that railways have diverted the main currents of traffic from so many roads, it is a hardship, amounting to oppression upon innkeepers, to exact post-horse duties, carriage duties, and licences to keep horses ; and if the effect be, as it frequently is, to prevent innkeepers from taking out the licences, or keeping the horses, the unwise impost which brings little or nothing to the revenue (less than nothing, if the expenses of collection, supervision, informers, and prosecutions be taken into account), is a peculiar hardship on people who may have to travel, or would travel, but are prevented, on those old turnpike roads ; and in towns, the duty on hackney coaches is directly obstructive to the use of that kind of vehicle.

If these duties were removed, not only would the health and comfort of a large class of the people be improved, by more easy access to healthy recreation ; but the increased demand, which would immediately follow, for all sorts of carriages, of all sizes, would give employment to a greatly increased number of hands in all the branches of that department of trade, as well as in other branches of trade, and industry connected with it.

Of the impolicy, and absurdity of regulating the tax by the number and size of the wheels of the carriage ; and by the number, size, and description of the horse, pony, or mule kept for private, or public use ; of the impolicy, absurdity, and inconsistency of the tax on hair-powder, and on armorial bearings, and of the peculiar distinction between the classes of persons liable to the higher or lower rate of this last-mentioned tax ; and of the impolicy, absurdity, and hardship of increasing the expenses of locomotion by duties on stage coaches, and on passengers travelling upon railways, nothing further need be said than that the whole is a system of vexation

and cruelty, as impolitic for the purposes of revenue, as it is unjustifiable for the interests of the people, being an unnecessary interference with their natural liberty, detrimental to their welfare and comfort.

No. 5.—Page 28.

LAND TAX.

Net produce of Tax for the Year ended 31st

March, 1856	<u>£1,157,525</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
-------------	---	---	---	---	-------------------	----------	----------

To account for the small amount of revenue produced by this tax, it will be necessary to examine into its origin and progress.

The origin of land taxes in this country may be traced to the duty called *escutage*, or *scutage*, which resulted from the feudal system. This duty appears to have been first levied in the fifth year of Henry II., and was a pecuniary satisfaction in lieu of knight service, required to be rendered by the holder of a certain quantity of land, denominated a knight's fee. Before this time, however, a tax was occasionally levied on land by royal authority. William I. imposed a tax varying from 1*s.* to 6*s.* upon every hyde of land (100 acres), which tax was called Danegeld, from its being raised to prepare against a pretended attack of the Danes. In the reign of William II. an annual tax of twelvepence was assessed upon each hyde of land, which, it seems, produced a sum of 15,000*l.* Henry I., upon the marriage of his daughter, in the eighth year of his reign, received 3*s.* upon every hyde of land. But the levying of taxes of this description, and espe-

cially of the scutages, becoming most oppressive from the arbitrary manner in which they were exacted, a stipulation was introduced into Magna Charta (c. 12), that no scutage should be imposed without the consent of the Common Council of the realm ; and by the 25th Edward I., c. 5 and 6, and subsequent statutes, it was provided that the King should take no aids, task, talliage, or tax, but by the common consent of the great men and Commons in Parliament.

The tax occasionally raised specifically upon land, and the scutages, &c., merged, at length, into the tax called the subsidy, introduced in the reign of Richard II. This was a tax on all persons in respect of their reputed estates, after the nominal value of 4*s.* in the pound for lands, and 2*s.* 8*d.* for goods ; whilst aliens were to contribute in double proportion. From the time of Henry II. tenths and fifteenths were also granted by Parliament, which were temporary aids issuing out of personal property, being the real tenth or fifteenth part of all the moveables belonging to the subject. These were first levied by assessments made whenever a fresh aid was granted ; but in 8th Edward III. a valuation was made throughout England of the fifteenth part of every township, &c., and the rate recorded in the Exchequer, the amount in the whole being 29,000*l.* In all subsequent grants of fifteenths, this sum was taken as a basis of assessment ; so that, owing to the alteration in the value of land and money, it was necessary, in latter times, in order to raise the supply required, to depart from the ancient rule of granting only one subsidy and two fifteenths. The first occasion upon which this rule was broken through was at the time of the Spanish invasion in 1588, when the Parliament granted to Queen Elizabeth two subsidies and four fifteenths, and under Charles I. a still larger number was voted. The subsidy being also assessed upon an early valua-

tion, the rate of repartition became almost nominal; for, from the causes previously stated, a lay subsidy appears never to have exceeded 70,000*l.*; nor a clerical subsidy, including the monasteries, 20,000*l.* The estates of the clergy were, until 15 Charles II., c. 10, assessed by their own convocation, after the rate of 4*s.* in the pound, according to the valuation of their livings in the King's books.

These subsidies and fifteenths continued to be granted until the outbreak of the civil wars, at which period the Long Parliament, in order to provide for the subsistence of their forces, levied monthly assessments according to certain fixed rates. This system was continued under the Commonwealth, when a twelvemonth's rate was fixed at 840,000*l.*, or 70,000*l.* a month, for England; 144,000*l.*, or 12,000*l.* a month, for Scotland; and 216,000*l.*, or 18,000*l.* a month, for Ireland; making a total of 1,200,000*l.* These assessments were levied by a uniform rate on the income from real property, and on the estimated annual value of personalty; that is, 20*l.* of personalty, or 1*l.*, the annual value thereof at 5 per cent., were rated exactly the same as 1*l.* of income from realty.

From this time periodical assessments were made upon the above principle, and the sums to be levied were fixed according to the requirements of the State. These assessments were, in substance, the same as those raised ever since the reign of William and Mary, under the name of land tax, and were, even before then, occasionally so designated.

Upon the accession of William and Mary, the circumstances of the country were such that no tax could be depended upon as sufficiently productive, that was not imposed upon land, in the produce of which the wealth and income of England at that time principally consisted. That it might be rendered as efficient as

possible, new assessments were taken of the property and income that each individual possessed. But the rate was far from being equal. Those who were attached to the principles established at the Revolution were forward to show their zeal in favour of the new Government, and gave in a fair statement of their real situation; whilst the secret, and avowed, friends of the exiled family, the sordid and avaricious, gave in a very different account, estimating their property at the lowest rate at which it could be calculated. Hence the assessments, since known under the name of the land tax, were not in any respect so productive as they might have been.

The valuation here referred to was made in pursuance of the Act 4 William and Mary, c. 1, which directed an assessment of 4*s.* in the pound upon all real estate assessed on the *bonâ fide* rack-rent, and on offices (except naval and military); and on personal estate 24*s.* per 100*l.*, or 4*s.* in the pound on 6*l.*, the then legal rate of interest, stock on land and household property being exempt. The King's Remembrancer in the Exchequer was required by the Act (s. 9) to engross in a book made of parchment the several sums returned to him as assessed upon every county, riding, city, and town, and every hundred, wapentake, parish, division, town, and place therein, which returns the Commissioners appointed for putting the Act into execution were therein directed to make. The sum realised by the assessment amounted to 1,922,712*l.* Five Acts followed, imposing a certain pound rate upon the same description of property; but in the subsequent year, owing to the sum raised by this mode of assessment showing an annual decrease, it was deemed expedient that a specified sum should henceforth be levied, which sum was fixed at 1,484,015*l.* 1*s.* 11½*d.* by the 9th and 10th Wm. III. c. 10.

By reason of some difficulties which thereupon arose in apportioning the quotas to be paid by certain dis-

tricts, the Act of the following year, the 10th and 11th Wm. III. c. 9, which granted a like sum of 1,484,015*l.* 1*s.* 11*½d.*, directed that the proportion of tax which each district was found to have borne under the assessment made pursuant to the Act 4 William and Mary, c. 1, should determine the ratio in which it was to contribute towards making up the quotas the Act imposed upon the several counties, cities, and hundreds, as therein expressed.

From the passing of this Act, to the year 1798, the land tax was voted annually, and the Act under which the grant was thus yearly levied fixed the amount to be raised for the particular year, and named the pound rate at which the same should be assessed. The rates during this period ranged from 4*s.* in the pound, which was the highest rate named, to 1*s.* in the pound, the lowest rate named. In the year 1798, the usual Act was passed for granting the land tax for the service of that year. This Act, the 38th George III. c. 5, directed the sum of 1,989,673*l.* to be raised in England and Wales, and fixed the contingent for Scotland at 47,954*l.*, which sum was the amount paid by that country since the Union.

In accordance with the established practice, the Act mentioned the quotas to be set upon counties, and certain divisions, towards raising the amount to be paid in England and Wales, and required that such quotas should be still levied within the several divisions and sub-divisions in proportion to the sums respectively assessed thereon by the Act 4th William and Mary. The quota for Scotland was also to be raised according to the proportions specially named in the Act.

Before this time, however, the principle of assessment observed under the first Land Tax Acts had been widely departed from. Personal estate, which it was evidently intended should contribute the larger share of the annual quota granted, had been gradually re-

lieved from assessment, and to such an extent, that in 1798 the proportion of the quota borne by pensions, offices, and personal estate, together amounted only to 150,000*l.*, whilst lands, tenements, and other property contributed the remainder.

In the month of June, 1798, Mr. Pitt produced his scheme for the redemption of the land tax, which was brought into operation by the Act 38 George III. c. 60. The object of this measure was to diminish the pressure of the public debt in the market, by causing the absorption of a large amount of stock. In order to carry out the plan, the land tax, which by the assessment of the current year was charged upon the several counties, ridings, stewartries, cities, boroughs, cinque ports, towns, and places in Great Britain, in respect of lands, tenements, and hereditaments, was made perpetual upon such counties, ridings, &c., subject to redemption; and the quotas, thus rendered a fixed charge, have been therein levied (minus the redeemed portion thereof) from the passing of such Act, to the present time.

From the fourth year of the reign of William and Mary (1692), the duties raised in England, under the head of land tax, were levied at rates varying from 1*s.* to 4*s.* in the pound, according to the exigences of the times, by Acts annually passed for such purpose, down to the year 1798, when so much of the quota of land tax granted by the Act of that year, the 38th Geo. III. c. 5, as was assessed upon lands, tenements, and hereditaments was made perpetual by the 38th Geo. III. c. 60, subject to redemption; which latter Act continued the powers and provisions of the 38th Geo. III. c. 5, for assessing and levying the unredeemed portion of the tax. These powers and provisions were also continued by the 42nd Geo. III. c. 116, which repealed the 38th Geo. III. c. 60, and were confirmed by the 53rd Geo. III. c. 142; but they have been since modified in

some respects and extended in others by subsequent Acts passed for the more effectual assessment and collection of the tax.

The substance of the existing enactments, in the order in which they are brought into operation, for the due raising of the duties, may be more conveniently considered under the following general heads:—

1st. The persons and nature of property chargeable, and the persons and subjects exempt.

2nd. Mode of assessment and collection, and rights and remedies of persons assessed.

THE PERSONS AND NATURE OF PROPERTY CHARGEABLE, AND THE PERSONS AND SUBJECTS EXEMPT.

First, as to property assessable.

The following are declared liable to assessment:—All and every manors, messuages, lands, tenements, mines, iron mills, furnaces, and other iron works, salt springs, and works, all parks, chaces, warrens, woods, underwoods, coppices, and all fishings, tithes, tolls, annuities, and all other yearly profits, and all hereditaments, fee farm rents, and all other rents, payments, and sums of money issuing out of any lands. (38 Geo. III. c. 5, s. 4 and 24.)

These are to be charged with as much equality, and indifference as is possible, by a *yearly assessment*, to be made at an *equal pound rate*, not exceeding four shillings in the pound, upon the real value thereof, towards raising the quotas made perpetual by the 38th Geo. III. c. 60, upon the several cities, boroughs, towns, parishes, and places in England, Wales, and Berwick-upon-Tweed. (42 Geo. III. c. 116, s. 180.)

Where these different descriptions of property are assessed to the poor rate, such rate is very generally adopted as the basis for assessment to the land tax,

and may, in most cases, be regarded as a sufficiently convenient and equitable mode of valuation for the purpose. It should, however, be borne in mind that, such mode of adjusting the rate of land tax can only be resorted to when it is found to accord fully with the directions set forth in the Act.

All lands, &c., are to be rated and assessed in the places where such lands lie, and not elsewhere. (38 Geo. III. c. 5, s. 53.)

Tenants are to pay the tax, and deduct it out of their rent; and if any difference should arise between them and their landlords; concerning the rate, the Commissioners for putting the Act into execution, have power to settle the same as they may think fit (s. 17 and 18).

Contracts or agreements, however, between landlord and tenant, touching the payment of taxes and assessments, are not to be affected (s. 35).

Assessments upon the house of foreign Ministers are to be paid by the landlord or owner (s. 46).

Every assessment to the land tax should be made upon the several occupiers of the property chargeable.

The 5th section of 38 Geo. III. c. 5, after reciting that many of the manors, messuages, lands, tenements, tithes, hereditaments, and premises liable to assessment to the land tax, are subject to the payment of several rent-charges, or annuities, and other annual payments issuing out of the same, or to the payment of divers fee farm rents, rents service, or other rents thereupon received, or charged, and that, consequently, the owners of the lands so encumbered, do not receive the true yearly value of the same; authorizes such landlords and owners to abate and deduct out of every fee farm rent, or other annual payment, so much of the pound rate assessed upon the said manors, lands, &c., as a like rate for every such fee farm rent, or annual payment respectively, shall, by a just proportion, amount to, so

as such fee farm rent, or other annual rent, do amount unto twenty shillings per annum, or more.

In the case, however, of fee farm rents, or other chief rents, payable to the Crown, or to any person deriving title from the Crown by purchase, under the Acts 22 and 23 Charles II. c. 6 and 24, it is enacted (38 Geo. III. c. 5, s. 30 and 31), that the receivers thereof are to allow to the parties paying the same, four shillings in the pound upon such rents, and a proportionate rate for any greater sum than ten shillings, excepting such fee farm rents as were payable before 25th March, 1693, to any college, hospital, or any person exempted by the Act; and provided such deduction does not exceed the sum assessed upon the whole estate, out of which such fee farm rents, &c., may issue.

Secondly, as to persons and subjects exempt.

The Sovereign, by virtue of Royal prerogative, is exempted from the operation of all statutes imposing duties on the subject.

The 25th section of 38 Geo. III. c. 5, declares exempt, colleges and halls, in either of the two Universities of Oxford and Cambridge; and the colleges of Windsor, Eton, Winton, and Westminster; the corporation of the governors of the charity for the relief of poor widows and children of clergymen; and the college of Bromley; and all hospitals in England and Wales, or Berwick-upon-Tweed, for, or in respect of, the sites of the colleges, halls, or hospitals. It also exempts all masters, fellows, readers, officers, &c., of any college or hall, and all masters and ushers of schools, from assessment for any profits, or exhibitions, &c., arising, or growing due to them in respect of their places or employments in such universities, colleges, or schools. The same section further exempts any houses, or lands, which, on or before the 25th March, 1693, belonged to the sites of any colleges, or halls, in England, Wales,

or Berwick-upon-Tweed, or to Christ's Hospital, St. Bartholomew's, Bridewell, St. Thomas's, and Bethlehem Hospitals, in the city of London, or borough of Southwark, or any of them, or to the said corporation of the governors of the charity for the relief of poor widows and children of clergymen, or to the college of Bromley, and any other hospital or almshouse, for or in respect only of any rents, or revenues, which, on or before the 25th March, 1693, were payable to the said hospitals, or almshouses, to be disbursed for the immediate use and relief of the poor of the said hospitals, &c. only.

But all houses and lands held by lease, or grant, from the said corporation, or of any of the said hospitals, or almshouses, are liable to be assessed for so much as they are yearly worth, over and above the rents reserved and payable to such corporation, &c., to be disbursed for the immediate relief of the poor of such corporation, &c. (s. 26).

The district commissioners of land tax are to determine how far lands, &c., belonging to hospitals, &c., not exempted by name, are liable to assessment (s. 28).

All lands, &c., belonging to any hospital, or settled to any charitable, or pious use, which were assessed in the fourth year of William and Mary, are likewise chargeable; all other lands, &c., then belonging to such hospitals, &c., not then assessed, being exempt (s. 29).

The tenants of any houses and lands belonging to the said colleges, halls, hospitals, &c., who, by their leases, or agreements, are bound to pay rates, and taxes, are also liable to assessment (s. 27).

No poor person shall be chargeable, whose lands, tenements, or hereditaments, are not of the full yearly value of 20s. in the whole (s. 80).

Tolls, or duties on turnpikes, are not chargeable (s. 122).

In addition to the above exemptions, thus distinctly provided for, there are the following, arising both incidentally, and directly, out of the Redemption Acts:—

Allotments made under Inclosure Acts, in respect of messuages, lands, &c., upon which the land tax has been redeemed, and in respect of rights of common appurtenant thereto, are not assessable. Such allotments are likewise not chargeable when made in respect of lands, or common rights, &c., belonging to hospital lands, &c., coming within the exemptions contemplated by the 25th section of 38 Geo. III. c. 5.

Upon the partition of any lands, &c., held by coparceners, or joint-tenants, &c., the allotments made to such of the coparceners, &c., who have redeemed their proportion of land tax, are exonerated from assessment. (42 Geo. III. c. 116, s. 39.)

By the Act 53 Geo. III. c. 123, s. 38, tithes and other hereditaments belonging to any livings, the land tax whereof had been redeemed previous to the passing of that Act, are discharged from liability to assessment, although not rated to the land tax at the time of redemption; and all tithes and hereditaments sold or conveyed, to any body politic, or corporate, or company, or any feoffees, or trustees, for charitable, or other public purposes, for redeeming land tax on other hereditaments, are likewise declared free from assessment, though not rated to the land tax at the time of such sale or conveyance thereof.

By the Acts 46 Geo. III. c. 133, 49 Geo. III. c. 67, 50 Geo. III. c. 58, and 53 Geo. III. c. 123, powers were given to Commissioners appointed under the Great Seal, to direct the exoneration and discharge of the land tax charged upon the lands, tenements, and other hereditaments belonging to any livings, or other ecclesiastical benefices, and charitable institutions, the whole annual

income whereof did not exceed 150*l.* without payment of any consideration.

It was enacted by 53 Geo. III. c. 123, s. 38, that all messuages, lands, tithes, and other hereditaments belonging to the several livings, &c., which had been, or were intended to be, exonerated from land tax, under the powers of the above Acts, should be absolutely discharged, and exonerated from land tax from the periods of their exoneration under either of those Acts, and from all future assessments to the land tax, notwithstanding certain portions, or parts of the tithes, or other hereditaments belonging to such livings, were not, at the respective periods of exoneration, rated to the land tax.

These powers of exonerating small livings, &c., were renewed and enlarged by the 54 Geo. III. c. 173, and 57 Geo. III. c. 100, and the commissioners for executing such Acts might exonerate the hereditaments belonging to such livings, &c., not rated to the land tax, from liability to assessment; and all the hereditaments belonging to any living, so exonerated, are thereby declared free from any future assessment, although any of them, or any parts thereof, were omitted to be rated to the land tax at the time of the exoneration (s. 4). Allotments made under Inclosure Acts, in respect of lands, &c., belonging to livings exonerated under the powers of the above recited Acts, are also not assessable to land tax.

The duties on personal estates having been repealed in 1833, by the 3 William IV. c. 12, the only duties remaining to be considered are those chargeable in respect of public offices of profit. The 38 Geo. III. c. 5, directed that these offices should be rated at four shillings in the pound, towards the aid by such act granted. The 38 Geo. III. c. 60, which made perpetual, subject to redemption, the sums charged on lands, &c., provided

that the sums charged on public offices, should be raised under any Act or Acts, to be passed for that purpose. These duties were consequently raised under annual Acts, down to the year 1836, when they were made perpetual by the 6 and 7 William IV. c. 97, and for ascertaining, assessing, and regulating such duties, the provisions of one of the annual Acts, the 6 Geo. IV. c. 9, were continued. This Act directs (s. 3) that every person having, using, or exercising, any public office, or employment of profit, which is, or shall be, rated by virtue of the 38 Geo. III. c. 5, shall be charged a sum not exceeding the amount at which such office was assessed in the year 1798. Every person assessed for his office or employment, is to be rated in the place where the same is exercised, although the profits arising therefrom are paid elsewhere (s. 16). Where any office is executed by deputy, the deputy is to pay the assessment thereon, and deduct the same out of the profits of such office (s. 17).

No officer, however, is chargeable in respect of any salary, stipend, or, other annual payment, which has been specially exempted from the payment of aids or taxes, by any act of parliament, order in council, warrant under royal sign manual, or order of the commissioners of the treasury, or in any case where the sum assessed on such salary has been directed to be repaid out of the public revenue, provided that the authority for the payment of such salary, nett, or without deduction, or the repayment of the duty assessed thereon, be certified by some principal officer in the department to which such officer belongs (s. 21).

In those instances of the rents and revenues of the residentiaries of the cathedral churches in England and Wales, being chargeable to the land tax, where the overplus of such rents, above the tax and other charges, goes in shares to them, such residentiaries shall not be

farther chargeable in respect thereof, as enjoying offices of profit (s. 19).

AS TO THE LAND TAX PAYABLE IN SCOTLAND.

In the Act 5 and 6 Anne, c. 8, intituled, "An Act for an Union of the two kingdoms of England and Scotland," it is provided (Article IX.) "that whenever the sum of 1,997,763*l.* 8*s.* 4½*d.* shall be enacted by the parliament of Great Britain, to be raised in that part of the kingdom called England, on land and other things usually charged in acts of parliament, there for granting an aid to the crown by a land tax, that part of the United Kingdom, now called Scotland, shall be charged by the same Act with a further sum of 48,000*l.* free of all charges, as the quota of Scotland to such tax, and so proportionately for any greater or lesser sum raised in England, by any tax on land, and other things usually charged together with the land; and that such quota for Scotland, in the cases aforesaid, be raised and collected in the same manner as the cess now is in Scotland, but subject to such regulations in the manner of collecting as shall be made by the parliament of Great Britain."

In accordance with the above Statute, the quota for Scotland varied proportionately with that of England, down to the year 1798, when the sum granted for England in that year, by 38 Geo. III. c. 5, was 1,989,673*l.* 7*s.* 10½*d.*; and the quota for Scotland fixed at 47,954*l.* 1*s.* 2*d.*, to be levied by an eight months cess of 5,994*l.* 5*s.* 1¾*d.* per month; the said cess to be raised out of the land rent, according to the monthly proportions within the respective shires, stewartries, cities, and boroughs, set forth in the Act (s. 128); the proportion of the boroughs was to be rated and paid according to the

then existing tax roll, or was to be settled by themselves (s. 129).

The amount of the quota is to be raised free of all charges, and to be paid at Edinburgh (s. 136).

The sums so assessed upon the counties, stewartries, cities, boroughs, &c. were made perpetual, subject to redemption, by the 38th Geo. III., c. 60; and they have from such time been assessed under the provisions of the 38th Geo. III., c. 5, continued for the purpose by the 42nd Geo. III., c. 116, which Act provides (s. 180) that all lands, tenements, and hereditaments, situated in Scotland, shall continue subject to a new assessment yearly, and from year to year, according to the rates, and in the manner established by law or custom, in that country.

Thus, it appears, that the land tax is now assessed on a valuation of estates made in the year 1692, when certain payments, or quotas, were apportioned to each county, or hundred, or other division; and that for upwards of a century the tax was payable under annual acts, and varied in amount from one shilling in the pound, to four shillings, at which latter sum it was made perpetual by the 38th Geo. III., c. 60, subject, however, to redemption by the landowners, on certain conditions. But no new valuation of the land has been made, and the proportion chargeable to each district has continued the same as it was in the time of William III., as regulated by the Act of 1692. That assessment is said not to have been accurate, even at that time; and, of course, improved cultivation, and the extended markets for agricultural produce, raised up by the application of industry, inventions, and capital to manufacturers and commerce, during the last 150 years, have completely changed the relative value of different portions of the soil.

The difference is caused by the accumulation of pro-

ductive capital and fixed property in one district over another; partly, also, by the discovery and application of minerals, unknown in 1692. The chief increase, however, is caused by the difference between the order of persons who live on rent, and eat up the wealth it represents without residue, leaving the smallest possible profit to the producers of rent; and the order of persons engaged in manufactures and commerce, who live more moderately in relation to income, and add what their moderation spares to productive capital, again doing the same, and again and again, to be succeeded by others, augmenting the productive capital in like manner. At last, the increase elevates the rent per acre of their county, until the land tax valuation of 1693 stands at $\frac{1}{2}d.$ per pound for manufacturing Lancashire, and one-ninth of a farthing for commercial Liverpool.

In the discussions which took place in 1798, when Mr. Pitt introduced his bill, which passed into a law, for the redemption of the land tax at twenty years' purchase, two leading facts, with which the public have now to deal, were prominently put forward.

The first was, *that the valuation of property for land tax was the same in 1798, as it had been in 1695.*

The second was, *that the Act for the redemption of that land tax (4s. in the pound on the valuation of 1695) did not preclude that or any future Parliament, from imposing another land tax, or augmentation, or a re-assessment of the present; so that the redemption of the land tax, under the provisions of 1798, does not preclude by any compact avowed or implied, the Legislature of the present day, or any future time, from re-assessing the rental of land at 4s. in the pound of present value (or at any other rate), if it be the will of the nation that such should be done; at the same time Mr. Pitt comforted the House of Commons of that day,*

with the assurance that Parliament was not likely to propose a re-assessment.

He said that he proposed, by this measure, to reduce so much of the public debt as should leave an income of 2,400,000*l.*, applicable to the public service. The pecuniary advantages arising from this measure must be obvious from this statement, because the public would dispose of 2,000,000*l.*, for which they would clear off the public debt to such an amount, that the interest would produce a sum of 2,400,000*l.*, leaving upon the whole, a clear gain to the public of 400,000*l.* He proposed to sell the land tax at twenty years' purchase!

By a return to the House of Commons, dated 12th July, 1844, the total of land tax in England and Wales, was shown to be 1,858,924*l.* 6*s.* 1½*d.*, of which 724,463*l.* 19*s.* 2¾*d.* was redeemed, and 1,134,460*l.* 6*s.* 10½*d.* was unredeemed.

The impropriety and impolicy, if not dishonesty, of selling the land tax, it is hardly now worth considering. But the sale of the land tax for a given sum, at any time, must be a fraud upon posterity. Suppose it to be redeemed by the landowner by purchase of twenty years, the price of redemption is either at once spent by Government, or it is not. If spent, it is a financial fraud, as the amount of the tax for the future is levied on something else, most probably, on some process of industry, or operation of commerce, to its obstruction, and the diminution of its capital.

If the redemption money be not at once dissipated, the sale of the land tax is not less a financial blunder, if not a fraud. If land worth 100*l.* a year be sold by its private owner at twenty years' purchase, he receives 2000*l.* If he dissipate this sum in the first year, or in any period of years, he must supply his wants elsewhere, or starve. Nobody will grant him, and the

generations of his family after him, through all posterity, 100*l.* a year, or 2,000*l.* every twenty years. But if the State sell 100*l.* a year of land tax for 2,000*l.*, and dissipate that sum in one year, or in any period of years, its future wants must be supplied elsewhere, no matter where the burden falls.

But, even were the land tax exchanged for what is an equivalent at the period of exchange, say 100*l.* a year of land tax, to pay off 2,000*l.* principal of national debt (which was never due), the financial blunder is the same in principle, though it might be less in degree. The weight of the public debt diminishes, first, positively, by alteration in the value of money, and second, relatively, by increase of population, and tax-bearing property. Whereas rent, or tithe (land tax being analogous to rent and tithe, except in the improper adherence to the fixed valuation of 1695), increases, not only as other property and population increase, but in a ratio considerably greater. Let it be affected by the same influences as rent and tithe, as, doubtless, the public will soon insist on its being; to the influence of competition for space to cultivate, to build; to the influence of expanding capital, population, and industry, in manufactures and commerce, and it also will expand. To sell the right to this source of revenue for the improvident mess of potage, called Redemption of the Land Tax, is a folly which finds no adequate expression in political phraseology; it is a breach of trust, and very like embezzlement and fraud; breach of public trust for the benefit of private interests; embezzlement of public funds to serve immediate political ends; fraud upon the public finances by the legislative and governing order of men, to aggrandise their own private property.

For showing the absurd inequality of the land tax, and how small a portion of the burdens of the State is

borne by real property, and by land in particular, it is only necessary to refer to the Tables published in detail, of which the following is a specimen, framed from the returns of land tax valuation in the Parliamentary Paper 316, session 1844, and the property-tax returns, ending 5th of April, 1843, in the same paper, and in the official returns adduced as evidence before the Lords' Committee on Burdens on Land.

LAND TAX PAID UPON THE GROUND RENTS AND OTHER REAL
PROPERTY OF CERTAIN TOWNS.

	Real Property assessed to Pro- perty Tax, 1842.	Amount of Land Tax on Land and Tene- ments according to the Assessments of 1695 and 1798 still adhered to.	Rate of Land Tax per Pound on Value of Real Property assessed to Property Tax, 1842.
London, City . . .	£1,686,266	£87,056	s. d. about 1 0½
St. Pancras . . .	1,247,479	1,399	" 0 0½
Marylebone . . .	1,087,783	564	half a 0 0½
Paddington . . .	584,152	354	about 0 0½
Bath . . .	314,541	657	" 0 0½
Cheltenham . . .	216,108	491	" 0 0½
Leeds and Suburbs . . .	544,908	1,057	" 0 0½
Sheffield . . .	215,596	212	under 0 0½
Liverpool . . .	1,568,547	168	about one 9th of 0 0½
Ditto, Everton, Tox- teth, West Derby . . .	342,481	341	under 0 0½
Manchester . . .	1,573,405	1,106	" 0 0½
Preston . . .	177,196	98	" 0 0½

The same calculations made on all the counties and divisions in England and Wales show an average rate per pound of $4\frac{3}{4}d.$ on the annual value of real property assessed to property tax in 1842-3.

That this mode of assessing the land tax is quite contrary to the meaning of the Legislature, is beyond all doubt, for all the acts expressly provide that the tax on "all hereditaments of what nature and kind soever," shall be "the sum of 4s. for every 20s. by the year, which the said messuages, &c., are *now* worth to be leased, if the same were truly and *bonâ fide* leased

or demised at rack-rent, and according to the full true yearly value thereof;" and all enact that Commissioners shall be appointed, and that such Commissioners shall appoint two assessors for each parish, whose duties are thus defined in the Act of 1798:—"To ascertain and inform themselves, by all lawful ways and means they can, of the true and full yearly value of all manors, &c.;" and having so done "to assess all and every the said manors, &c., after the rate of 4*s.* for every 20*s.* of the full yearly value as the same are let, or *are worth to be let at the time of assessing thereof* as aforesaid." If the valuation of 1692 were to be the fixed and unvarying assessment, what occasion was there for any assessors at all after that had been made? Why should they have been required annually to perform what would then have been a mere unmeaning process? Such, however, is the construction under which landowners have profited, and the revenue has suffered ever since the year 1692.

Of the effect of this interpretation Liverpool affords a striking example. The now populous district of Everton contributes about 12,000*l.* to the income and property tax, exclusive of sums paid by wealthy residents at their places of business in town. But its contribution to the land tax is just *fourteen pounds* and a few odd shillings per annum! This is 4*s.* in the pound on land unredeemed, according to its valuation in the reign of William III.; on the present actual value it is some inappreciable fraction of a farthing.

The same inequality, and, in most cases, the same nominal amount of charge, is found in the assessment to land tax in Scotland.

The county of Ayr has the largest amount of real property assessed to the land tax; but the rate per cent. is only 1*l.* 7*s.* 2*d.* The county of Peebles, which is valued at 432*l.* 2*s.* 9*d.*, is assessed at the rate of

16 per cent. But the value of real property assessed to the property tax in 1843 is 531,318*l.* 18*s.* 4½*d.*, while Peebles is assessed at 74,810*l.* 7*s.* 3½*d.* The county of Lanark is assessed to the property tax in 1843, at 1,834,998*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*, or more than three times the amount of the county of Ayr, yet it pays to the land tax only 1*l.* 5*s.* 5*d.* per cent. Edinburgh pays 13*l.* 7*s.* per cent. on a valuation of 15,921*l.* 14*s.* 3*d.*; but the rapid increase of manufacturing industry has added immensely to the wealth of this city, the estimate being 609,483*l.* 14*s.* 4*d.*; but even this has been outstripped by the City of Glasgow, which is estimated at 629,340*l.* 8*s.* 10*d.* But the amount of land tax charged on Edinburgh by the Act of 1797 is 2,660*l.* 10*s.* 6*d.*, while on Glasgow it is only 958*l.*

These instances may be sufficient to show the absurd inequality and gross injustice of the present system, and that it is quite impossible to establish a sound principle for taxing real property on any such unsound basis.

No. 6.—Page 28.

INCOME TAX.

Net produce of Tax for the Year ended

31st March, 1856 £15,159,457 14 4

This tax was imposed in 1842, for the purpose of effecting certain very important, though only partially carried out, commercial reforms; and its duration was limited to three years. Its unjust, and, therefore, oppressive, operation was soon the subject of universal complaint; but the evil being regarded as only

temporary, it was readily submitted to for the sake of the permanent good which was thereby to be effected; and which was effected accordingly. The extension of commerce and wealth, consequent upon even an imperfect adoption of sound principles, has enabled the country to bear, with comparative ease, burdens which would, otherwise, have pressed upon it with ruinous severity. But this tax which was to continue only for three years, has now reached its sixteenth year, with an assured extension of four years more, and no rational prospect of its discontinuance even then. The horse has borne the saddle, and carried the rider so far, and so successfully, that the rider shows no inclination to dismount, and, probably, never will, until, by hard kicking, he is fairly thrown off.

The call, which has been so generally made, for the equitable adjustment of this tax, is a call which can never be answered, for the simple reason, that an equitable adjustment is impossible. As long as the attempt be made to tax fluctuating, and uncertain, incomes, inequality and injustice must be inseparable. Incomes derived from skill, and industry; or from professions, and trades; must ever be fluctuating, and uncertain; and also precarious; and to tax these at the same rate as fixed, and permanent, incomes, must ever be injustice; nor can any attempt to make the rate in proportion to the value of such incomes, ever do more than diminish the amount of that injustice, which it can never altogether remove. The principle is radically wrong. Income can be fairly and properly taxed only as the annual produce of realised property, or capital. Income only furnishes the means for making a fair valuation; equal in effect, and fair and just for all. This is truly a tax upon property; resting on a clear, and well defined principle, and also on a fixed, and firm, basis. But a tax upon income is indefinite, and never

can have any fixed, or secure, basis. The one is always the same, or calculable in value; the other is never the same, and never calculable in value. No safe data for the calculation can ever be obtained, so long as the possession of life, and strength, and faculties, and the other numberless chances on which income, from other than realised property, or capital, depends, remains uncertain. But why should a tax be imposed upon incomes arising out of, and dependent solely on, life, and strength, and faculties? Why should professional incomes, the profits of trade, and the wages of labour, be taxed? Why should men be taxed whose only property is the daily produce of their own industry? If it be said that they enjoy the benefits and protection which the State extends equally to all; that may be a good reason why all should contribute to the State for such benefits, and protection; but can be no reason for taxing property which they do not possess. A tax for the protection of the person, is one thing; but a tax for the protection of property is another, and different thing. Both may be very proper subjects for taxation; but a tax for the protection of property which has no existence, is as absurd as would be a tax for the protection of a life which has ceased to exist.

But it is as bad in policy as it is wrong in principle to attempt to tax the incomes of the productive or useful labourers of the State. The tendency of any such tax is to prevent, *pro tanto*, the increase of wealth and capital, or realised property; for capital is nothing more than accumulated savings, all being originally the produce of labour. In the form of capital, or realised property, it becomes the wealth of the nation, and then may properly contribute a fair share to the necessities of the State. But to make income contribute before it has assumed the form of capital, or realised property, is to destroy the source of the wealth of the nation; and

is as absurd as would be the conduct of a person who keeps bees for the sake of their honey, if he were to cut down and destroy all the flowers in his garden and neighbourhood before the honey were made. Equally absurd it is to say that the honey-makers thereby go free. They are the industrious, wealth-producing labourers; and when this labour is completed, and the honey made, it will be taken as required for use; and, if wisely, so much only will be taken as is absolutely and fairly required, and enough will be left to enable the workers to continue to produce; nor of the abundance will any be taken for feeding the wasps and the drones.

Thus the productive industry of the country produces income, which, accumulating, forms capital, the only real wealth of nations; and whilst that process of formation is going on, all are equally interested in preserving the means from diminution, because all derive equal benefit when the process is completed, by the contribution which the capital then makes to the purposes of the State.

If this be the true view, it follows that direct taxation is the only true system; but as this will be more fully shown when "Taxation as it ought to be" comes to be considered, it is not necessary here to pursue this inquiry further.

No. 7. — Page 30.

POST OFFICE.

Net Receipt for the Year ended 31st March,	
1856	<u>£2,767,201 4 11</u>

This cannot properly be called a tax-producing revenue, nor ought it to be. If all the expenses di-

rectly and indirectly connected with the Post Office Establishment were paid out of the proceeds, there would, probably, be no surplus receipts. But from the manner in which the official accounts are made up, it is impossible to discover how this account really stands.

The delivery of letters is one of the duties which properly devolves on the Government of every State; and to convert this duty into the means of raising a revenue for any other State purpose is manifestly unjust and impolitic. The State takes upon itself to prohibit the delivery of letters, otherwise than through the Government Post Office, and the public are, therefore, entitled to require that the letters be delivered at the lowest charge, and with the greatest despatch consistently with safety.

No. 8.—Page 32.

CROWN LANDS.

Net Receipt for the Year ended 31st March,

1856	£421,715 1 1
----------------	--------------

In the time of William the Conqueror the income from this source was estimated at 1,061*l.* 10*s.* 1½*d.* per day, now variously computed to be worth, in our present money (entirely exclusive of the increased value of the property), from five to eight or ten millions per annum.

On comparing with this estimate the last year's net payment into the Exchequer from the Woods, Forests, and Crown Lands, the question is naturally asked, "What has become of the inalienable Crown Property?"

This question has been often asked, but never answered; and never will be, for nobody can answer it. All that is known is, that a great portion has been made away with by means no less flagitious than those by which the whole was originally obtained; and that what remains has, by a long course of fraud and mismanagement, dwindled down from millions of annual value to the comparatively nominal sum now annually produced.

These sad remains of the national property were placed under the management of the existing Board of Commissioners, by Act 50 George III., c. 65, passed in 1810, being seventeen years after this measure was "most particularly recommended" by the Commissioners of Inquiry in 1793, when "the death of the late Surveyor-General of Land Revenue in 1809," afforded a "convenient opportunity of carrying this scheme into effect." (See Commissioners' First Report, 1812.) The land revenues of Ireland were not handed over to the Commissioners until 1827, nor those of Scotland until 1832; and in the same year the office of Surveyor-General of Works and Public Buildings was added, and, concurrently, the Board were "charged with the execution of improvements in various parts of the metropolis." (Report of Select Committee, 1848.) Thus the Board has now the management of—First, all the royal gardens, parks, forests, and woodlands; second, the land revenue, consisting of leasehold rents, fee farm rents, and profits of mines, manors, &c., in London, and in nearly every county in England and Wales. The Commissioners have also the control of the Holyhead Road and Harbour, besides all public works and buildings, including repairs and alterations in the royal palaces and gardens, the public offices, the new Houses of Parliament, &c.

It is obvious, at the first glance, that to fulfil

efficiently duties so important and multifarious, must require considerable ability, great energy, and industry, and a large amount of various knowledge in the Commissioners; and that even these will be unavailing without the utmost exactness and regularity in all matters of account; a careful selection of subordinates in each department, and the most strict and vigilant supervision so that every individual officer may feel himself liable to be called upon frequently, and at any moment, to give an account of his trust to a competent superior, who will neither pardon incapacity, nor connive at the slightest breach of integrity.

How these duties have been performed it is not the present purpose to inquire, nor would that inquiry be an easy task. What sort of accounts the Commissioners kept before 1829 does not appear, book-keeping by double entry being first introduced in that year. But it *does* appear by the evidence of the Assistant Paymaster-General that "the accounts have not been kept in such a way as to enable a clear account (namely of capital and income) to be made; besides, the books, though they have recorded the payments into the Exchequer, have never furnished such information as to prove the accuracy of the sums paid over, and therefore it has generally been a matter of estimate." (Evidence of W. G. Anderson, Esq., Assistant Paymaster-General.)

Any attempt to arrange the mass of confusion which these accounts present, must be utterly hopeless, and all that need be said further is, that the inquiry, so far as it has yet proceeded, discovers every conceivable fault of management, without one single visible merit; and as all past experience proves the inevitable tendency to negligence, jobbing, and corruption, in the management of the national estates, the only conclusion which can be arrived at is, that the sooner the temptation be

withdrawn, by a complete change of the present system, the better.

No. 9.—Page 38.

Miscellaneous Receipts for the Year ended
31st March, 1856 £1,158,147 19 8

These are receipts from the United Kingdom, under the following heads:—

	£	s.	d.
Duties on Offices and Pensions	1,895	12	0
Small Branches of the Hereditary Revenue	59,664	0	3
Fees of Public Offices	104,553	7	6
Trustees of the King of the Belgians	34,000	0	0
Unclaimed Dividends received	98,741	1	8
Old Stores and Extra Receipts, Naval and Military Departments	520,347	2	2
Extra Receipts, Civil Departments	129,569	3	4
Income of London and Dublin Gazettes	17,843	7	1
Superannuation Abatements	29,132	9	0
Contribution from East India Company, Retired Pay, &c.	60,000	0	0
Contribution from Consular Establishments in China	20,682	5	2
Contribution towards Salaries of Official Referees	1,580	0	0
Contribution towards Merchant Seamen's Pen- sions	18,731	2	3
Savings on Grants of Parliament, &c., and Over- Issues repaid	1,435	17	9
Bonds and Debts recovered	620	19	8
Premium and Interest on Exchequer Bills, and Bonds sold	59,351	11	10
	<u>£1,158,147</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>8</u>

These miscellaneous receipts form the last item in the official accounts of the regular revenue of Great Britain

and Ireland, which was, for the year ended 31st March, 1856, as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
1. Customs	23,213,797	0	6
2. Excise	17,632,138	14	4
3. Stamps	7,063,610	1	1
4. Assessed Taxes	1,978,552	5	9
5. Land Tax	1,157,525	0	1
6. Income Tax	15,159,457	14	5
7. Post Office	2,767,201	4	11
8. Crown Lands	421,715	1	1
9. Miscellaneous	1,158,147	19	8
Total Net Revenue	<u>£70,552,145</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>10</u>

From the foregoing account it appears that the Customs and Excise Duties for the year 1855–6, yielded 40,845,935*l.*, and that the total revenue for that year was 70,552,145*l.* But to know what is actually paid by the people, the following must be added for

COSTS OF INDIRECT TAXATION.

1. The cost of collection of Customs and Excise duties, as given in the Government Finance Accounts, is 2,578,069*l.* To this must be added the cost of collection of the whole revenue under the present mixed system, moderately estimated at 10 per cent. (the actual cost being well known to be much more), which amounts to 7,055,214*l.*

2. Superannuation and compensation allowances and pensions for Customs and Excise, as given in the Government Finance Accounts, 350,083*l.*

3. Extra profit to traders for the advance by them of the Customs and Excise duties, enhancing the price of

the first cost of all articles, according to the evidence in the trades, at the least 25 per cent., which, on the net revenue from Customs and Excise for 1855-6, is 10,211,483*l*.

4. Allowances, drawbacks, fraud, and negligence, and all the other innumerable outlets for loss in this complicated system, moderately estimated at only 5 per cent. on the net revenue from Customs and Excise for the year 1855-6, 2,042,296*l*.

5. Cost of prosecutions for smuggling, adulterations, and other breaches of revenue laws; the maintenance in prison of those convicted; the expense of those transported; and the amount of penalties levied. These cannot be calculated accurately; but this estimate of 1 per cent. on the net revenue from Customs and Excise for 1855-6 will be found to fall short of the reality, 408,459*l*.

6. Cost in the heavy augmentation of the rate for the relief of the poor throughout the United Kingdom, estimated at only one-third of the amount raised in England and Wales on an average of the last 40 years, 2,508,897*l*. per annum.

7. Cost in the loss and injury to the trade and manufactures of the country, from the operation of the present restrictive, and to a great extent, prohibitory system of indirect taxation. And here calculation is at fault. But if all the infinite variety of heads which compose the sum total of this loss and injury be collected together, and carefully considered, it will be found to be no exaggeration, at the estimate of 125 per cent. on the whole of the Customs and Excise duties for the year 1855-6, which would be equal to 51,057,419*l*.

8. Cost in the consequent loss and reflected injury to the whole landed property of the kingdom, which it is impossible to estimate with any pretension to accuracy,

but which is taken, in round numbers, at about 15 per cent. on the present estimated yearly value, or 28,000,000*l.* a year.

These several heads of expenses are brought together in the following

SUMMARY OF COSTS.

1. Cost of Collection of Customs and Excise Duties	£ 2,578,069
Additional Cost of Collection of the whole Revenue	7,055,214
2. Superannuation, and Compensation Allowances and Pensions for Customs and Excise	} 350,083
3. Extra Profit to Traders for advance of Customs and Excise Duties	
4. Allowances, Drawbacks, Fraud, and Negligence .	2,042,296
5. Prosecutions for Smuggling, Adulterations, and other breaches of the Revenue Laws, and Expenses of Maintaining and Trans- porting Persons Convicted	} 408,459
6. Augmentation of Poor Rates	
7. Loss and Injury to the Trade and Manufactures of the Country	} 51,057,419
8. Loss and Injury to the Landed Property and Houses of the Kingdom	
Total Costs as estimated	<u>£104,211,920</u>

Thus it appears that the cost to the country of raising the revenue of 70,552,145*l.* was 104,221,920*l.*, making the total taxation (including Crown Lands) for the year ended 31st March, 1856, equal to 174,764,065*l.*

Such was, at a moderate calculation, the amount paid last year, by the people of this country, directly, and indirectly (including Crown Lands), under the present system of taxation.

But as this will be disputed by those who take a different view of the question, it is due to them to show the grounds on which these calculations are made.

To pay a direct tax costs nothing beyond the amount of the tax itself, and the simple collection of it. Even the Stamp duty, with all its cumbrous machinery, is collected for about 2 per cent. With Customs and Excise, if all the costs, charges, and expenses, together with the losses from frauds, delays, and other obstructions and impediments to trade (to say nothing of the demoralising effects, and the consequent incalculable evils) be taken into the account, the case will be found to be very different. Add together the salaries of clerks (in Liverpool alone amounting to several hundreds) and Customs' brokers. Also demurrage of ships, many of them worth to the owners 20*l.* per day, and upwards, detained for landing waiters; and all the crowd of paid loiterers. Also, add loss of markets for cargoes delayed, often to the very serious damage and inconvenience of the merchant and owner. Also, dock room, provided at vast expense by mercantile communities, that dock room prevented by Customs' regulations and interference, from doing much more than half the service it might, and otherwise would do. Also, waste of labour in weighing, unpacking, and examining goods for the satisfaction of the revenue officers, without any benefit to anybody, but with certain great trouble, loss of time, and often with great injury to the commodities; and, in connexion with this, about a third of all the wages paid to porters on board, or attending ships discharging, or at bonded warehouses, where seldom more than six or seven hours' work are done in a day, though the men are paid for ten and a half hours. These items are all difficult to ascertain accurately, but collectively must amount to a very heavy sum.

It is, probably, no exaggeration to assume this cost of *paying* Customs and Excise duties to be equal to 6 per cent.

But to this is to be added, the actual payment to the officers of the Customs and Excise, Coast-guard, &c., for salaries and allowances (exclusive of superannuation and compensation allowances and pensions) which is stated in the finance account for the year ended 31st March, 1856, to be 2,578,069*l.* 2*s.* 5*d.*, being equal to about $6\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. upon the net payment into the Exchequer from both sources, namely, 40,845,935*l.* 14*s.* 10*d.*, all paid to people who ought to be themselves *actively producing*, instead of hindering others.

These together make $12\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. charge, in addition to the tax of 225 per cent. on the single article of tea.

But this is not all.

The dealer's profits on the duties are estimated at 25 per cent., and if it be considered that two, three, and, in some cases, even four, cumulative profits (with all the intervening risks and charges for bad debts, insurances, &c., on the paid duty and cumulative profits in process) are paid by the actual consumer, and if the per centage of profit necessary to the existence of the last retailer (whether in price or quality matters not) be taken into account, the candid inquirer will, probably, think this estimate within the mark. This, added, makes $37\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.

The cost of prosecutions for smuggling, and other breaches of revenue law, the maintenance in prison of those convicted, and the amount of penalties levied, cannot be calculated accurately, but the estimate of 1 per cent. will be found to fall short of the reality. This makes $38\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.

But this burden of indirect taxation leads to another, or, at least, to a heavy augmentation of another, tax ;—the rate for the relief of the poor. What proportion of this is incurred through the impossibility of even able-bodied men earning an independent living, because high duties

have made trade unprofitable, have hindered production, have prohibited importation, compelling thousands of willing and skilful workmen "to sit enchanted in work-houses," is, of course, impossible to be stated with accuracy. But if one-third of the sum which the poor laws levy for the poor be set against this course, it does not seem an unfair estimate. Indeed, the loss to society in relief to the poor by the paralysis of industry is, probably more, were the private relief of friends to friends out of work taken into account; greatly more, were the dissipation of savings, the discountenance to provident habits, reckoned in the estimate. But taking only the legal relief of the poor, and only one-third of that as due to the evil influence of indirect taxation, that third has been for England and Wales, during the last 40 years, 2,508,897*l.* per annum, there having been no legal relief in Ireland or Scotland until a recent period, during part of which extraordinary causes (as the potatoe failure in Ireland) have been in operation, and extraordinary sums advanced in aid of the rates; while, as in Scotland, relief is not granted to the able-bodied by law, though the able-bodied, unemployed, and their dependants, must exist at the cost of the industry of some one, the estimate is incomplete. The amount returned as levied for the "relief and maintenance of the poor" in England, Wales, and Ireland, in the year ending 25th March, and in Scotland in the year ending 14th May, 1848, was 7,941,778*l.* In this there is, probably, an excess of 1,000,000*l.* above the average; yet as the excess was caused (so the official documents state) by "depression of trade," and as the decrease of the poor rates is now said to be owing to the "revival of trade," it is but fair to reckon the excess of the year, ending in the spring of 1848. Including it, the average is not likely to be under 6,750,000*l.*, which will give

2,250,000*l.* as the proportion due to the operation of the laws which prohibit commercial enterprise; hinder, or extinguish, manufactures; repress industry; and force productive lands to become non-productive. Those two and a quarter millions (about 7 per cent. additional on the cost of the Customs and Excise duties) added to the previously accumulated items, make $45\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

But oppressive as is this tax on the people, the effect on our commerce is worse. Our trade with China is conducted, for the greatest part, on the system of exchange. We take their tea in exchange for our manufactures, and the effect of our heavy duties, in comparison with the light duties of the Chinese, operates most injuriously on our trade with China.

In 1847, a select Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to inquire into the state of our trade with China. The committee sat sixteen days, and examined forty-six witnesses, comprising seventeen merchants engaged extensively in the trade with China.

Regarding the exorbitance of our duty on tea, its limiting our exports, and ultimately endangering altogether our trade with China, and thereby seriously interfering with the employment of labour, the report says:—"Your committee regret to state, on undoubted evidence, that the trade with China has been for some time in a very unsatisfactory position, and that the result of our extended intercourse has by no means realised the just expectations which have been naturally founded on a freer access to so magnificent a market.

"Whether we look to the tables of exports which mark a declension of exports in nearly every branch of manufacture, or listen to the statements of experienced merchants and manufacturers, we are brought to the same conclusion.

"We find the exports of cotton manufactures de-

cline between the years 1845-46, from 1,735,141*l.* to 1,246,518*l.* in value; those of woollens, in the same period, from 539,223*l.* to 439,668*l.*

“ We find that on a great proportion of the trade for the same years, the loss taken both ways, *i. e.* that on the manufactures sent out, and on the tea brought home in payment, may be fairly stated at from 35 to 40 per cent. ; so great, indeed, that some manufacturers have abandoned the trade altogether, and that much of the tea lately sent home has been sent on Chinese account, the English merchants declining to run the risk of the venture. We find that the difficulties of the trade do not arise from any want of demand in China for articles of British manufacture, or from the increasing competition of other nations. There is no evidence that foreign competition is to be seriously apprehended in the articles of general demand. The sole difficulty is in providing a return.

“ Of these (tea and silk), England and the United States are nearly the sole consumers; and thus it happens that the advantages which were so naturally expected from commercial access to a civilised empire, of above 300,000,000 people, are practically limited by the extent to which these countries are willing or able to consume these two products of the soil of China.”

After alluding to the silk trade, the committee proceed to say:—“ On a first cost, ranging on the qualities in most general demand, from 8*d.* to 10*d.* in the ports of China, if any reduction can be effected, it might be of advantage to the merchant, but would have no important effect on the selling prices in England. It is only through the duty,—a duty on the average qualities of about 200 per cent. and on the worst qualities of about 350 per cent.,—that any such reduction to the consumer can be effected as to stimulate consumption

in any sensible degree, and such a reduction thus becomes essential to a healthy and extended trade."

As affecting the social condition of the people, and our relation with China, the report observes:—"That it is also desirable in itself, as promoting the increased consumption of a beverage wholesome and agreeable to every class of our population, and one which is increasingly desired as a substitute for intoxicating liquors; and that it would be no more than is due to the Chinese, who tax our products so lightly, while we burden theirs so heavily, and with such inconvenience to their trade."

Respecting the effect of such reduction on the revenue the committee remark:—"In fact, the whole difficulty exists in the effect which any material reduction, and none other would be of much value, may be expected to have upon the *resources of the Exchequer*."

Mr. Robert Gardner, a large manufacturer, at Manchester, and shipper of his produce to China, says in his evidence before the Select Committee in 1847: "I think the operation of the duty on tea is most injurious. *Our trade is limited only by our returns.* As to the capabilities and dispositions of the Chinese, I believe that, if they had the means of paying for them, they would take nearly all the goods that we could manufacture in Lancashire."

The following statement of the cost of calico in Manchester, and of tea in China, is instructive, in Mr. Gardner's evidence before the Committee. "A piece of shirting, the cost of which, in Manchester, is from 9s. 6d. to 11s., according to the quality, will purchase twelve pounds of the average quality of tea. The Chinese levy a duty upon that piece of shirting of 7½d.; and we levy upon the tea which we receive in exchange for it 26s. 3d. Grey cotton shirting is one of the largest articles of export. Yarn is the next largest article.

Upon yarn they levy a duty of nearly five eighths of a penny per pound; twelve pounds of average quality of yarn, or one piece of average quality of shirting, will more than pay for twelve pounds of the average quality of tea.

“The consumption of tea continued to increase more or less, as the duty was higher, or lower, till last year, (1846) it was 46,000,000 lbs. I believe if the duty were reduced from 2s. 2½d. to 1s. 6d., the consumption would be, at least, 60,000,000 lbs. I take it for granted that every pound extra consumed of tea, would cause a consumption of 4 lbs. of sugar. I believe it would give employment to 20,000 work-people extra, and to at least, 50 vessels extra, of 400 tons each.”

Mr. Walter Buchanan, partner in a house in Glasgow, trading for many years at Singapore, and in the practice of making remittances to China, stated that tea is always the principal means of remittance from China, and that heavy losses had been incurred. He said, “I consider, as far as China is concerned, that the limit of our trade with China must be the extent to which we can consume tea, and other Chinese produce.”

Mr. Farbridge, of Manchester, largely engaged in trade with China, stated: “I do not believe there is any possibility of a further exportation of our manufactures to China without an alteration in the system of the duties; and I fear there are no means of sending out our manufactures cheaper.”

The evidence of all the witnesses examined on this part of the question was to the same effect.

Medical and chemical witnesses were examined, and all proved the sanitary effects of tea; and the great extent to which adulteration was carried, in consequence of the enormous duty levied on tea, and that many of these adulterations were of a poisonous, and all of a highly injurious, nature. And further, all the evidence

proved that the present trade with China furnished no criterion for estimating what might be our trade with China, if, on our part only, that trade were entirely free.

Confining attention, for the present, to the single article of tea, who can pretend to say what might be our trade with China if this tax were abolished, and our merchants were free to import tea into this country, at the prime cost in China, with the addition only of the cost of freight ; which, in the rate per pound, would be an inappreciable, and imperceptible sum ? Who can pretend to say to what extent China might receive British manufactures, in exchange for tea and silk, if all impediments to this mutual interchange of natural productions were removed ? Who, therefore, can pretend to calculate with accuracy the loss to this country, directly, and indirectly, from the tax on tea alone ?

These considerations which, more or less, apply to all the articles on which Customs and Excise duties are levied, are now left to the reader to be applied by himself. On such a question as this, it is to be expected that different minds will take different views, and will arrive at different conclusions from the same facts. But it is also expected that there are many in this country who will come to the conclusion, that these estimates of costs and losses are very much under the true mark ;— and that the time has arrived when the system, which works these results, ought to be changed.

It is often used as an argument against direct taxation, that taxes, so levied, press with unequal, and unjust severity on realised property, and that the realised property, or capital of the country, is already suffering under this unequal and unjust pressure. That the ground on which this argument rests is wholly unfounded, and that the facts are entirely the other way, will be seen in the following

STATEMENT SHOWING THE DESCRIPTION AND AMOUNT
OF TAXES ON TRADE AND INDUSTRY, AND PROPERTY.

Taxes.	Net Revenue.			Taxes on Trade and Industry.			Taxes on Property.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Customs' Duties . . .	23,313,797	0	6	23,313,797	0	6			
Excise Duties . . .	17,633,138	14	4	17,633,138	14	4			
Stamps . . .	7,063,610	1	1						
vis.:									
Deeds and other Instruments . . .	...	...		...	...		1,218,737	2	3
Probates and Letters of Administration . . .	...	...		...	...		1,151,526	9	3
Legacies and Successions . . .	...	...		...	...		1,699,346	17	10
Gold and Silver Plate . . .	...	...		...	...		63,563	0	8
Insurance, Marine . . .	...	...		324,383	4	1			
„ Fire . . .	...	...		1,280,441	19	3			
Other Stamps . . .	...	...		1,335,612	7	9			
Assessed Taxes . . .	1,978,552	5	9	...	...		1,978,552	5	9
Land Tax . . .	1,157,525	0	1	...	...		1,157,525	0	1
Income Tax . . .	15,159,457	14	5						
viz.:									
Returns under Schedules A. B. C. . . .	...	...		...	...		9,850,922	14	5
Returns under Schedules D. and E. . . .	...	...		5,308,535	0	0			
Post Office . . .	2,767,201	4	11	2,767,201	4	11			
	£68,972,282	1	1	£51,862,109	10	10	£17,120,172	10	3
To this must be added the Extra Profit to Traders for the advance by them of the Customs and Excise Duties, enhancing the price of the first cost of all articles 25 per cent. as before mentioned . . .	...	...		10,211,482	0	0			
To this must be added the Cost of Collection of the Customs and Excise Duties as given in the Finance Accounts . . .	...	...		2,578,069	2	5			
Superannuation and Compensation Allowances and Pensions for Customs and Excise, as given in the Finance Accounts . . .	...	...		359,083	15	9			
Cost of Collection, Post Office . . .	...	...		1,554,799	1	2			
Superannuation Pensions, and Compensation Allowances, Post Office . . .	...	...		17,672	2	4			
Cost of Collection of other Taxes, estimated at only £3 per cent. . . .	...	...		1,472,547	0	0	513,605	0	0
				£68,096,763	12	6	£17,633,777	10	3

This calculation gives to the account of property the whole of the stamps on deeds and other instruments, on probates and letters of administration, on legacies and successions, on gold and silver plate; also the whole of the assessed taxes, the land tax, and income tax returned under Schedules A, B, and C.

On the other hand, this calculation gives to the account of trade and industry the whole of the Customs and Excise duties, the Stamp duties on marine and fire insurances, and the whole of the other stamps not before charged; also the income tax under Schedules D and E, and the whole of the Post Office. And the cost of collection, &c., is charged accordingly.

Now, it will be evident, on this statement, that a large proportion of the charges given to the account of property might fairly have been carried to the account of trade and industry; and yet, on the statement as here made, the taxes on trade and industry appear to be yearly 50,402,986*l.* more than the yearly taxes on property.

But the cost and charges of collection here given are taken from the official accounts. If, instead of these, the costs and losses and other incidental expenses, direct and indirect, on the collection of the whole revenue, as before given, were to be added, the account would then show that the trade and industry of this country is taxed yearly above one hundred millions per annum more than property!

Such is the operation of the present system of taxation in this country: and whether this be a fair statement or not, every reflecting reader, with the facts and figures now before him, is left to judge for himself.

TAXATION AS IT OUGHT TO BE.

ON entering into this second, and most important, division of the subject of the present inquiry, the principles or rules which ought to govern all taxation should be borne in mind. These were, therefore, shortly laid down at the commencement of this inquiry, and are now referred to.

The annual labour and skill of every nation is the fund which originally supplies it with all the necessities and conveniences of life, either in the immediate produce of that labour and skill, or in what is purchased with that produce from other nations.

The protection and encouragement, therefore, of that productive labour and skill, by every possible means, is one of the first duties of every nation, on the ground of policy as well as justice.

The expense of defending the society, and that of supporting the dignity of the chief magistrate, are both laid out for the general benefit of the whole society. It is reasonable, therefore, that these expenses should be defrayed by the general contribution of the whole society, all the different members contributing, as nearly as possible, in proportion to their respective means.

The revenue which must defray, not only the expense of defending the society, and of supporting the dignity of the chief magistrate, but all the other necessary expenses

of government for which the constitution of the State has not provided any particular revenue, may be drawn either, first, from some property which peculiarly belongs to the Sovereign or Commonwealth, and which is independent of the people; or, secondly, from the property of the people. If from the people, the contribution should be for the protection which the State affords to their persons and property.

From these rules or maxims it follows that, in every civilised State, all persons should contribute equally for the protection of their persons; and for the protection of their property, in proportion to the value of their property.

Without entering into any philosophical definition of property, it is sufficient to say that, the property here intended, is that which has been realised, and become of ascertained value, and permanent; and which then requires protection, as contradistinguished from income, or the wages of labour and skill, which are uncertain in value, and precarious, and which, being spent as received, therefore does not require the same protection from the State which is extended to realised property, or capital.

If, then, it be one of the primary rules, in fixing and regulating taxation, to give the utmost possible protection and encouragement to productive labour and skill, it seems to follow that, it is the first duty of every State to leave all persons, as much as possible, in quiet possession, and free enjoyment, of the fruits of their labour and skill. And this seems to be dictated equally by justice and policy. Of the justice there can be no question; for, if a tax be paid to the State for the protection of the person, it is only common justice that the person who has paid that tax should be left in the quiet possession and enjoyment of the fruits of his labour and skill; and if it be true that "the annual labour and skill of every nation is the fund which originally supplies it with all

the necessaries and conveniences of life," it seems to be equally true, and free from question, that it is the policy of every State to leave the fruits of that labour and skill, which is the origin or source of every nation's wealth, undiminished by taxation.

By the continuance of the people's labour and skill the nation's wealth increases; and out of this increase the people save whatever they may acquire, beyond their daily wants, real or imaginary, for the necessities and conveniences of life. These savings, accumulated, then assume the form of realised property, or capital; and this constitutes the strength, and the power, or the wealth, of the nation.

It is, therefore, very fit and proper, that the State should take from the strength, and power, or wealth, of the nation, that which is absolutely required for its maintenance, support, and extension. But to take from that which creates the strength, and power, or wealth; or, by any other means to check its production or growth, is not only preventing the extension of that strength, and power, or wealth, but is undermining and destroying, or weakening, the foundation on which the whole fabric stands.

This is the true distinction between Income and Property; or, at least, this is the distinction here assumed. It is as unphilosophical and unwise, as it is improvident and unjust, to attempt to impose a tax on income, because property must be taxed. It is, therefore, as unwise as it is unjust, on the part of the owners of realised property who are taxed, to complain that they are unfairly taxed because uncertain and precarious incomes are left untaxed.

The unfairness is in the attempt to tax, as realised property, that which is only uncertain and precarious income; and the folly of such a complaint will be shown in the fact that, whatever is inexpedient for the public

good, is inexpedient for the good of every individual of which the public is composed.

It is manifestly an impossibility to impose a tax on incomes necessarily uncertain in amount, and precarious in tenure, which will not be unequal and unjust, and in direct violation of every rule and maxim which should govern taxation.

Of this nature are all incomes derived otherwise than from realised property, or capital. But as it is assumed to be *not* the policy of a state to impose a tax on professional or trade incomes, or on the wages of labour; and as the proofs in support of this assumption will be found in the details here given, it is unnecessary to pursue this part of the question further.

As already shown, it is the first duty of a State, in imposing taxes, so to impose them that they shall be most equally, and most easily borne by those who pay them; the ultimate end and object of all taxation being; protection and benefit, to person and property.

It has also been shown that, the only property requiring protection, and receiving benefit, is that which has become realised, and permanent, or capital; thereby distinguished from uncertain and precarious income; and, therefore, that realised property is the only property which ought, consistently with justice, and sound policy, to be subject to taxation.

It is now to be shown what should be the first tax imposed consistently with this rule, and that is

A PROPERTY TAX.

This will be more conveniently considered under the following heads:

1st. The nature of the property chargeable.

2nd. The mode of assessment and collection.

First,—As to the property chargeable.

REAL ESTATE.

All manors, messuages, lands, tenements, houses, and other buildings, parks, chaces, warrens, woods, underwoods, coppices, fisheries, tithes, to be charged yearly, in respect thereof, for every 20s. of the annual value thereof, the sum of 4s.

Exemptions.—All lands and houses of poor persons under the full yearly value of 40s. in the whole; and all churches and other buildings for public worship.

PERSONAL ESTATE.

All annuities, dividends, and shares of annuities payable to any person, body politic or corporate, company or society, whether corporate or not corporate, out of any public revenue, to be charged yearly, for every 20s. of the annual amount thereof, the sum of 4s.

Exemptions.—All annuities and dividends under the yearly value of 20s.

Every fractional part of 20s. of the annual value aforesaid, to be charged at the rate aforesaid, provided no rate or duty be charged of a lower denomination than one penny.

Second,—As to the mode of assessment and collection.

The charge on real estate to be made with as much equality and indifference as is possible upon the present real yearly value thereof, without any deductions; and a new valuation thereof to be made every seventh year.

Every assessment to the property tax to be made upon the several occupiers of the property chargeable, except assessments upon the houses occupied by foreign ministers, which are to be paid by the landlord or owner.

Tenants and occupiers to pay the tax, and deduct it out of their rent; and if any difference arise between them and their landlords concerning the rate, Commissioners to have power to settle the same as they may think fit.

Owners of land, &c., subject to the payment of rent-charges or annuities, and other annual payments issuing out of the same, or to the payment of fee-farm rents, rent service, or other rents thereupon reserved or charged, to be at liberty to deduct out of every fee-farm rent, or other annual payment, so much of the pound rate assessed upon the said lands, &c., as a like rate for every such fee-farm rent, or annual payment respectively, shall by a just proportion amount to.

Mortgagors to be at liberty to deduct from the interest payable by them on all mortgages of land, &c., or monies, so much of the pound-rate assessed thereon, as a like rate for every such annual payment respectively, shall by a just proportion amount to.

All existing exemptions for lands, houses, &c., extra-parochial, or otherwise, to be abolished.

The Sovereign, by virtue of royal prerogative, is exempted from the operation of all statutes imposing duties on the subject.

From the foregoing outline of the proposed property tax, it will be seen that a new valuation must be made of all the manors, lands, houses, &c., in the United Kingdom; and that a new valuation of the same must be made in every seventh year; and that the tax is to be assessed on the actual yearly value, free from all deductions.

It will also be seen that the new valuation *excludes*, for the purpose of taxation, all mines and minerals, and all works and manufactories of every description; and also all canals and railways; and all advowsons, or rights of presentation to church benefices; but *includes*

the houses, and other buildings, of all works and manufactories; and the land of all canals and railways.

With respect to mines and minerals, these, if coming under the description of realised property, are considered to be not that description of property which is suitable for taxation; but being a property requiring much capital and industry to be expended on it, to make it available for any profitable return; and when converted into money, and become realised property, or capital, then being liable to taxation. It is, therefore, treated in its natural state, as raw produce, and excluded from taxation on the acknowledged ground of sound policy, in regard to all raw commodities connected with British manufactures, for which nothing can be more important than coal and iron.

Nor is the argument for its exclusion less strong on the ground of justice; for, if the capital which is used for converting these raw materials into national wealth be already taxed, and if, by that process, profitable employment be furnished to a large portion of the population, it would be as unjust, as impolitic, to limit and contract the means by taxation.

The same reasons apply, and, perhaps, with equal force, for the exclusion of all works and manufactories from taxation; but how much bitterness of spirit for hard and unjust exactions; and how much remorse for false swearing, will be spared throughout the kingdom, by these exemptions, will never be known until the secrets of all hearts be laid open.

With respect to canals and railways, much of the same reasons also apply to these exemptions. But the profits from all public canals and railways, and all other public companies, will be taxed in the form of dividends, being then in the character of realised property.

With respect to advowsons, these being more of a right, or privilege, for the discharge of a sacred trust,

than a property for valuation, therefore ought not to be subject to any tax.

Here, in faint outline, is the scheme for the proposed new property tax, to be filled up with all needful provisions.

And what is this, but the original old land tax of William the Third, re-produced in a milder form?

And why should it not be now re-produced, and carried out, thus amended, in the spirit of the original intention?

In the review already given of the Acts relating to the land tax, it will be seen that the land tax, now paid, is assessed on a valuation made upwards of one hundred and fifty years ago. Considering the remarkable changes which have taken place, since that time, in the value of property, throughout the kingdom, it cannot be matter of surprise that the very unequal manner in which the land tax is applied, is a cause of great dissatisfaction, and much dispute, in different parts of the country. We have no system of taxation, at the present time, similar to this, of raising *fixed* amounts upon certain districts of property.

It is impossible to look at the printed statements, showing the amount of land tax charged on the different counties of England and Wales, without seeing that a great portion of the property of the kingdom pays scarcely any land tax; and that the charge per pound over each district ranges from 1s. 1½d. per pound in Buckinghamshire, to ½d. in the pound in Lancashire. And if the survey be confined to particular districts, the injustice becomes still more striking. But if a tax is to be fixed upon the real property of the kingdom, there can be no reason why Manchester and Liverpool should not pay as many pence in the pound as Middlesex, or Bedford. The full extent, however, of the inequalities of this tax cannot be shown,

because the assessments on which the tax is actually levied cannot be got at ; but it is known that these remain for many years unaltered ; and that, consequently, a great portion of real property in houses and buildings is never made chargeable. This is particularly the case in agricultural districts, where a great portion is charged upon land ; and this, in some degree, accounts for the greater proportion paid by agricultural districts, while houses are allowed to escape the tax altogether. If the printed tables be referred to, in which is arranged the amount of real property according to its several proportions to the total value throughout England and Wales, it will be seen that the county of Middlesex ranks the highest, and Radnor the lowest, in the scale. These show, at one view, the property of each county, in point of value, throughout the kingdom, as far as real estate is concerned ; and, in looking at the question of direct taxation, this relative value of different parts of the country should form the basis of an equitable system of taxation. The three counties which are the highest in value are, Middlesex, Lancashire, and Yorkshire. But the proportion in which these several counties are charged to the land tax, even in these large divisions, is very remarkable. The county of Middlesex, which constitutes about one-seventh of the entire value of real property in England and Wales, pays about one-fourth of all the land tax. In the county of Lancaster, the real property constitutes one-eleventh of the total value assessed to the income tax, but it pays only one eighty-second part of the entire land tax ; and Yorkshire, which holds the third place of wealth in the kingdom, or nearly equal to Lancashire, pays about one-nineteenth part of the tax. But, as already noticed, the real disproportion, or injustice of the tax does not show itself in these calculations, because the assessment of real property to the income tax is not

the actual assessment adopted for the calculation of the land tax; so that the rate per pound here given is considerably lower than it really is. The counties which stand charged at the highest rate per pound are the following:—

	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	
Bucks	1	1½	per pound.
Bedford	1	1	"
Hereford	0	11½	"
Essex	0	11	"
Suffolk	0	10	"
Berks	0	9½	"
Huntingdon	0	9	"
Oxford	0	8½	"
Middlesex	0	8½	"
Dorset, Norfolk, Rutland, and Sussex	0	8¼	"

This shows that, under the most favourable view of the case the agricultural districts all pay for land tax, in a far greater proportion than counties which have since increased their wealth through manufacturing industry. But if any one will take the trouble to make inquiries in any of the districts enumerated, he will find that the duplicate by which the land tax is collected, shows a much higher rate per pound, than that stated above.

These inequalities in the assessment of this tax are, however, only shown upon the most extensive divisions of the kingdom. But the same are found to exist in cities, boroughs, and towns, on which a distinct quota is set. Those which rank highest in the scale, if the income tax assessment be taken as the basis, are:—

	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	
Buckingham, borough of	1	7½	per pound.
Fordwich	1	2½	"
Tenterden	0	11	"
Lydd	0	11½	"
Winchester and Pevensey	0	11¼	"

Among those which rank the lowest are the towns following:—

	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	
Oxford University	0	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	per pound.
Cambridge University	0	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	"
Berwick	0	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	"
Southampton and Hastings	0	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	"
Dover, Bath, and Hull	0	1	"
Leicester	0	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	"
Newcastle	0	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	"

In looking over a list of this kind, no comments are required to point out the injustice of taxing the property of one place, nearly 10 per cent., and another only a thirtieth part of that rate.

If we come to those towns which may be said to have sprung into existence since the Act of 1797 was passed, and which were then not of sufficient importance to be taxed under a separate quota, we shall there find that the amount paid is merely nominal:—

	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	
Liverpool	0	0 $\frac{1}{10}$	per pound.
Manchester	0	0 $\frac{1}{4}$	"
Preston	0	0 $\frac{1}{4}$	"
Leeds and Suburbs	0	0 $\frac{1}{4}$	"
Macclesfield	0	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	"
Stockport	0	0 $\frac{1}{4}$	"

The metropolitan districts show the same inequality, thus:—

	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	
St. Paul's, Covent Garden	1	10 $\frac{1}{4}$	per pound.
St. Mary-le-Strand	1	1 $\frac{1}{4}$	"
St. Anne's	1	1 $\frac{1}{4}$	"
London	1	0 $\frac{1}{4}$	"
St. Andrew's, Holborn	0	11 $\frac{1}{4}$	"
Duchy Liberty	0	8 $\frac{1}{4}$	"
St. Martin's	0	7 $\frac{1}{4}$	"

	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	
St. James'	0	5½	per pound.
St. George's, Hanover Square	0	3	"
Kensington	0	2	"
Chelsea	0	1½	"
St. Pancras'	0	0½	"
Mary-le-bone	0	0½	"
Paddington	0	0½	"

It has been already shown that Middlesex, as a county, bears a greater portion of this tax than any other county in the kingdom, even when its great wealth is taken into consideration; but the amount of quota still levied upon each district, is still more striking. Take only a few examples. The little narrow, dirty, street, or lane, called Bedfordbury, now in St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, is assessed at 834*l.* 14*s.* 5*d.*, which is 180*l.* more than Long Acre. New Street, just above the same street, is assessed at 830*l.*, while that part of the Strand, which lies in this district, is only assessed at 700*l.*

Take the Holborn Division, and the same inequalities are to be met with. This division stands thus assessed to income tax and land tax:—

	Assessed to Income Tax.			Assessed to Land Tax.		
	<i>£</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
St. Pancras	1,247,478	13	1	1,399	5	2
St. Marylebone	1,087,792	18	4	564	5	1
Paddington	584,152	2	9	354	6	10
St. Giles in the Fields	306,439	6	0	12,273	0	4
St. George's, Bloomsbury }						
St. Andrew's, and }	182,748	11	10	9,018	13	4
St. George's, Holborn }						
Hampstead Rolls	66,573	19	4	855	17	4
Liberty of the Rolls	13,510	8	2	1,437	5	8
Total	3,488,685	19	6	25,902	13	9

Here is a district, with property amounting in value

to nearly three and a half millions, assessed to nearly 26,000*l.*; but upwards of 21,000*l.* are charged upon less than a million's worth of the property in the district.

The instances of this sort are too numerous to be quoted, nor is it necessary; the injustice of the present mode of levying this tax is proved, and must be admitted.

This is a national question, and ought to be met and dealt with on national grounds.

The Act of 1797 was for raising a given sum of money annually upon the whole of the real property of the kingdom, though, absurdly enough, the Commissioners appointed were to assess the several divisions, on the valuation, and, according to the proportions made in the year 1692.

It has been clearly established, in the Courts of law, that the Commissioners have power to alter the quotas assessed in different districts; but this power extends only to a *district equalisation*, and cannot effect any alteration in the original quotas assessed upon each district; and it is quite certain that these quotas cannot be altered; for, the 7th section of the Act clearly states, that the sums chargeable upon a county, shall be according to the proportionate sums assessed in the Act of 4th William and Mary.

The inequalities in the assessment of this tax in Scotland are equally great with those already given in England. But it is unnecessary to pursue these inquiries into details further. The custom of "aids" has ceased to exist in our modern system of taxation, and the present Land Tax Act is a strong proof of its injustice, nor can any good reason be advanced why it should not now be repealed, to make way for another Act, more suitable to the present times, founded on the sound basis of equal

taxation of all real property, and all other descriptions of realised property, which can be ascertained and taxed, without resorting to the unholy and demoralising test of an oath.

If it be admitted that a tax on land and houses be a legitimate tax, this is an admission that the tax ought to be levied in proportion to the value of the property; and then the present land tax, added to the income tax, is a double charge on this description of property. It is often heard as an argument for the continuance of the existing state of things, that all purchases of property have been made with the full knowledge of the present land tax; but this is no argument against an equitable adjustment of taxation; and with a land tax on land and houses, an additional house tax, and an income tax, an equitable adjustment is impossible. The only way of proceeding for this object is to repeal all these Acts, and to begin again on a new system. But this course of proceeding involves the necessity of some equitable arrangement with regard to that portion of the land tax which has been redeemed under

THE LAND TAX REDEMPTION ACT.

The land tax already redeemed amounts to something under a million of money. But, whatever the amount, it must be regarded as part of the national debt, and dealt with accordingly.

It is, therefore, proposed that a new stock be created, to be called the Land Tax Redemption Stock, by which all sums of money, paid for redemption of land tax, shall be discharged in the form of annuities.

By these simple and just means, all difficulty on this ground would be removed, for establishing one uniform valuation of real property throughout the kingdom,

which shall form the basis for all taxes levied upon it, whether for imperial or local purposes.

The process of redemption of land tax is nothing more than a transfer of annuities into the hands of the Crown, either by transferring so much stock as will produce an annual amount of interest equal to the sum of land tax charged, and *one-tenth* more; or by payment of a sum of money which shall purchase such an amount of stock in the three per cent. consols, or in the three per cent. reduced annuities, at the price of such stock the second week after the date of the contract. That is to say, that if the yearly sum of land tax to be redeemed shall amount to 100*l.*, then so much stock must be transferred as will produce 110*l.* interest.

Here, then, is no difficulty in re-adjusting this tax, and doing justice to all parties. It is simply a money transaction, and one easily carried out, the total sum redeemed being under 1,000,000*l.*

Thus, by repealing all the existing land tax, and Land Tax Redemption Acts, and imposing a tax on all the land and houses, and other realised property in the kingdom, by an equal rate levied on the present yearly value as proposed, all the accumulated and accruing capital of the kingdom would then contribute a fair share of taxation to the State, and a principle would be at once established, which would form an immoveable basis for the security of the public revenue, and the honour and prosperity of the nation.

The adoption of this tax would then enable the Legislature to repeal every statute relating to the Customs and Excise duties, and at once to sweep away a mass of tangled rubbish which, like a filthy and fermenting heap of corruption, is now spreading noxious exhalations over every part of the country, poisoning the people, paralysing their natural powers, and producing altogether an amount of degradation and misery, in-

calculable, and otherwise incurable. And not only might all this fermenting heap then be swept away, but also much other obnoxious rubbish, in all those Acts of Parliament under which the oppressive and unequal income tax, the mean and contemptible assessed taxes, and many of the cruel and vexatious stamp duties are now levied.

Let these intolerable and offensive burdens be removed, and who can say what might then be the prosperity and power of this people?

With such a country, and such a people, rich in nature's gifts, who can say what might be their greatness, and their happiness, if once delivered from these oppressive and debasing influences which are ever acting, like an over-hanging, all-pervading blight, destroying and desolating the fair face of the country, paralysing the natural powers and energies of the people, and, through the innumerable crooked ways of evil, demoralising the whole nation?

These are prospective benefits not to be calculated in figures, but to be thought of,—to be reflected upon,—to be hoped for,—to be looked for,—to be aimed at. The people must be made free before they can be made happy; and happy before they can be made good.

They are not free so long as they are deprived of the fruits of their honest labour, and of all those rights and privileges which they mainly contribute to support, but are not permitted to enjoy.

A vast majority are taxed beyond all proportion to their means, and they submit to it only because they do not know it. But the injustice and the cruelty is none the less for that.

That the sum of forty millions and upwards should be yearly levied and raised upon the people by Customs and Excise duties, is a shame and a disgrace to this enlightened nation. It is an open violation of all justice

between man and man, and sets at defiance all common sense and reason. It is a robbery which can only be palliated, but not justified, by such logic as—

“He that is robb’d, not knowing what is stolen,”
Let him not know it, “and he’s not robb’d at all.”

When will it be remembered that men with their millions are but stewards, or trustees, or what you will, to remind them of the solemn, everlasting truth, that they are stewards and trustees, at the longest, but for life, and not always even that; and that the time must come when they will be held accountable for their stewardship, or trust?

And when will the rulers of nations, and the law-makers, learn that they will be held accountable for laws which grind down and oppress the poor? which hide the greater part of the taxes in their tea and sugar, and almost all the other daily necessities of life, as well as in beer and tobacco, chiefest of the few luxuries and comforts left within the reach of those poor labouring men, by whose combined labour the nation’s wealth has been made and private riches have been accumulated.

When will they learn that these colossal fortunes, and all this wide-spread misery, are signs of something wrong,—that there is something rotten in the state which brings forth such anomalies, such monster evils, found mostly in rude and barbarous nations? Not that these colossal fortunes, or the possessors, are complained of, but the system which fosters and encourages these monstrous growths, at the expense and suffering of those by whose labour they are produced. As Coleridge truly said,—“There are errors which no wise man will treat with derision, lest they should be the reflection of some great truth yet below the horizon.” And what we have to do with here is,—that truth yet

below the horizon,—“Taxation AS IT OUGHT TO BE;” and the question now to be considered is, what would be

THE YEARLY PRODUCE OF THE PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX.

This is a question not easily answered, until the valuation be actually made.

But if a full and fair valuation were now to be made of all manors, messuages, lands, tenements, houses, and other buildings, parks, chaces, warrens, woods, underwoods, coppices, fisheries, tithes, in the United Kingdom; and if a yearly assessment were to be made, at an equal pound rate of 4*s.* in the pound, upon the *real yearly value* thereof, there are sufficient data to justify the expectation that this would yield a yearly sum of about forty millions.

And if the same equal pound rate were to be levied on the yearly produce, or value, of all the personal property of the kingdom, proposed to be taxed, there are sufficient data to justify the expectation that this would yield a yearly sum of, at least, twenty millions.

The value of all the real property and houses of the kingdom is variously estimated, but all the estimates agree in fixing the amount at a sum exceeding ten thousand millions. All these estimates, however, include mines and minerals, works, and various other descriptions of property not proposed to be brought into this valuation.

If, therefore, the estimate for the present purpose be taken at only one half of the lowest estimate, say five thousand millions, this can hardly be an exaggeration; and reckoning only 4 per cent. thereon, this will give the sum of 200,000,000*l.* for the yearly value of the same; which, at an equal pound rate of 4*s.* in the

pound, or 20*l.* per cent., would produce the yearly sum of forty millions.

And this calculation is supported by the actual returns under the present income tax; very far below the truth, as these returns are known to be, in the aggregate.

But taking these returns as they are, and reckoning, on the authority of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, one million for every penny of the present tax, the same calculation would produce on the 4*s.*, or 48*d.* in the pound, proposed to be levied, forty-eight millions; a sufficiently near approximation to support the estimated value here given.

But, looking at this property tax, as releasing at once the trade, and manufactures, of the country from all bonds and shackles; and leaving all engaged therein, as well as all other labourers of every class, in the full and free enjoyment of the fruits of their industry and skill,—what may be expected to be the amount of *realised* property in this country, when the re-valuation comes to be made in the first seventh year from the imposition of this property tax?

This is a still more difficult question, and, however interesting, is, perhaps, too much shrouded by the veil of time,—too much dependent on an infinite number of events beyond human foresight, to be looked into now with much practical utility. But is it too much to expect, in this vision of future prosperity, that sixty millions might *then* be more easily raised by an equal pound rate of 2*s.*, or 10 per cent., than *now* by the equal pound rate of 4*s.*, or 20 per cent.?

Here is much for reflection; and every one may answer this question for himself; but there is much ground for believing that such an expectation is not extravagant.

But, for the present purpose, it will be sufficient to give the following

ESTIMATED YEARLY RENTAL OF PROPERTY SUBJECT
TO THE PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX.

Annual Value of Lands in Great Britain in 1856	£ 64,970,184
" Houses " "	70,795,359
Rents Charge in lieu of Tithes " "	4,050,227
Manors and Lordships " "	173,527
Fines, Fee Farm, and Quit Rents " "	364,849
Woods, Underwoods, and Coppices " "	2,295,000
Fisheries " "	91,907
Annual Value of Lands, Houses, &c., in Great Britain in 1856	£142,741,003
Annual Value of Lands, Houses, &c., in Ireland in 1856	47,580,334
Annual Value of Lands, Houses, &c., in Great Britain and Ireland in 1856	£190,321,337
Dividends on Public Debt in 1856	28,112,824
Dividends on Railways in Great Britain and Ireland in 1856	12,130,861
Dividends on Canals in Great Britain and Ireland in 1856	1,590,087
Dividends on other Joint Stock and Public Companies, and all other rateable Property in the Kingdom in 1856	60,000,000
Total Yearly Value of Real and Personal Property in the United Kingdom rateable to the Property Tax	£292,155,109

Here is a yearly and improving rental, estimated in 1856 at 292,155,109*l*.

A rate of 4*s*. in the pound, or 20 per cent. on this amount, would produce a yearly revenue of 58,431,022*l*.

As much difference of opinion will, probably, exist on any estimate which can be made of the real and personal property of this country, it may be required to show how the foregoing estimate has been made.

The parliamentary return of the annual value of real property in Great Britain, as assessed to the property tax in the year 1842, has been taken as a basis. This is notoriously very imperfect, and much below the real annual value; but, for want of a better, this has been taken with all its imperfections.

A comparison has also been made between this assessment and the assessment to the property tax in 1814-15; and, again, these have been compared with the parliamentary return of 10th February, 1851, as to assessments to the property tax in Great Britain in 1848.

These comparisons show the following results:—

That in thirty-three years since the peace, lands in Great Britain had increased in value, to 1848, only 8,576,000*l.* in annual value; or a little more than 21½ per cent., while houses were augmented in value, 26,055,000*l.* in annual value; or a little more than 160 per cent. in the same time. And that the value of railways, gas works, and other property, chiefly held in shares, as personal property, had increased above twelvefold during the same time.

In the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Law of Partnership in July, 1851, the return of 10th February, 1851, as to assessments to the Property Tax, is thus referred to:—

PROPERTY.	ASSESSMENT. 1814-15.	ASSESSMENT. 1848.
	£	£
Of Lands	39,405,000	47,981,000
Messuages, or chiefly Houses, &c., in Towns	16,259,000	42,314,000
Railways, Gas works and other Property, chiefly considered personal property .	636,000	8,885,000

The report then proceeds as follows:—

“The result in round numbers shows, that in thirty-

three years since the peace, whilst lands in Great Britain have increased in value to 1848, only $8\frac{1}{2}$ millions in annual value, *or a little more than five per cent.*; messuages (being chiefly houses and manufactories, and warehouses in towns, and inhabited by persons depending greatly on trade and commerce) have augmented in value above 26,000,000*l.* in annual value, *or about 130 per cent.* in the same period. From the same returns it appears that the value of railways, gas works, and other property, chiefly held in shares, as personal property, has increased above twelvefold in the same period."

It is apparent that the *per centages*, as here given, are erroneous, the increase in the annual value of lands being, instead of "a little more than 5 per cent." a little more than $21\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.; and of houses, instead of "about 130 per cent.," being a little more than 160 per cent.

The report then proceeds:—

"The same results, showing the vast increase of personal property since the peace, in the United Kingdom, may be deduced from various returns to Parliament, showing the increase of legacy duty to have been derived from a capital of 24,000,000*l.* in 1816, and to have been paid on a capital increased to 45,000,000*l.* in 1845; the increase of deposits in the saving banks, and from other undoubted sources of information.

"Mr. Porter, one of our best authorities on statistical subjects, calculates the amount of personal property in Great Britain to have nearly doubled in thirty years, and to amount in 1845 to upwards of 2,200,000,000*l.* sterling, from 1,200,000,000*l.* in 1815.

"Your Committee beg to state, that in addition to the vast augmentation in the amount of personal property, it is to be remarked its great division among large classes of the community, of the middle, or even the

humbler ranks of life, as is shown by the returns of amounts of public stock held by each person, and other sources of information.

“It must be evident that in proportion to the facilities given for the security and investment of property acquired by enterprise and industry, it is likely that a people will be enterprising and industrious.

“It, therefore, becomes of great consequence to inquire, if there be any existing restrictions in the use, or application, of personal property which can be safely removed, or relaxed.

“Your Committee would observe that the course of modern legislation (the wisdom of which seems, in this particular, generally allowed) seems to have been gradually to remove restrictions on the power which every one has in the disposal of his property, and to remove those fetters on commercial freedom which long prevailed in this country.

“Laws favouring, or establishing monopolies are for the most part abolished. The usury laws, and various laws against combinations, have been repealed. General Acts to facilitate the formation of Joint Stock Associations, and for Building Societies, and other important Acts to admit the freedom of trade, have in late years been sanctioned by the Legislature.”

Proceeding, then, on the basis of the Assessment to the Property Tax in 1842, the lands in England, Wales, and Scotland are there taken as of the annual value of 45,753,616*l.* To this is added, for the increase in the value for the fourteen years from 1842 to 1856, 42 per cent., or, at the rate of 3 per cent. per annum, making the annual value of lands in Great Britain in 1856, as estimated, 64,970,134*l.*

The Select Committee of the House of Commons, in their report referred to, estimated the increase in the annual value of lands at a little more than $21\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

from 1815 to 1848, or, at the rate of a little more than $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. per annum.

But when it is considered how much greater has been the increase in the value of lands in the fourteen years subsequently to 1848, than it was in the fourteen years immediately preceding that period, perhaps, the estimate of 3 per cent. per annum will not be thought an exaggeration.

In the assessment of 1842, houses, &c., in England, Wales, and Scotland, are taken as of the annual value of 38,475,739*l*. To this is added, for the increase in the value for the fourteen years from 1842 to 1856, 84 per cent., or at the rate of 6 per cent. per annum, making the annual value of houses, &c., in Great Britain in 1856, as estimated, 70,795,359*l*.

The Select Committee, in their Report referred to, estimated the increase in the annual value of houses, &c., at a little more than 160 per cent. from 1815 to 1848, or at the rate of a little more than $4\frac{9}{10}$ per cent. per annum.

But when it is considered how much larger has been the increase in the number of houses in the last fourteen years, in proportion to the fourteen years next preceding the year 1848, it will, probably, be thought that the allowance of 6 per cent. per annum is rather under, than over the true estimate.

The sum of 4,050,227*l*. taken for rents charge in lieu of tithes in Great Britain, is the aggregate amount actually apportioned under the Tithe Commutation Act to the 31st of December, 1855. The jurisdiction of the Tithe Commissioners extends only to England and Wales; and as, in 14,070 cases in England and Wales, individuals owning any tithes have merged them in the land, according to the provision in the Tithe Act to that effect; and as, in numerous cases, tithes were (previously to the passing of the Commutation Act)

dealt with under local Acts of Inclosure, these, consequently, escape from the account; and tithes in other parts of the kingdom are not included in this sum.

In the assessment of 1842 manors in England, Wales, and Scotland, are taken as of the annual value of 152,217*l*. To this is added, for the increase in the value for the fourteen years from 1842 to 1856, 14 per cent., or at the rate of 1 per cent. per annum, making the annual value of manors in Great Britain in 1856, as estimated, 173,527*l*.

Fines, &c., are assessed in 1842 in England, Wales, and Scotland, as of the annual value of 320,043*l*. To this is added, for the increase in the value for the fourteen years to 1856, 14 per cent., or at the rate of 1 per cent. per annum, making the annual value of fines, &c., in Great Britain in 1856, as estimated, 364,849*l*.

Woods, underwoods, and coppices, are not separately assessed, nor is there any statistical work of reliable authority from which the value of this description of property can be obtained. But Mr. M'Culloch, in his *Geographical Dictionary* (vol. i. p. 454, Ed. 1849), estimates the annual value of the woodlands of England and Wales at 1,350,000*l*. And in the census for Ireland in 1851, 304,906 acres are stated to be covered by woods or plantations, out of 20,316,979, the total area of Ireland.

Out of these very rough materials the estimate has been made for England, Wales, and Scotland, by adding, for the increase in the value for the fourteen years from 1842 to 1856, 70 per cent., or at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum, to Mr. M'Culloch's estimate of 1,350,000*l*, making the annual value of woods, &c., in 1856, as estimated, 2,295,000*l*. These are not estimates which can be relied upon, but more probably are under than over the real value.

Fisheries are assessed in 1842 in England, Wales, and Scotland as of the annual value of 58,915*l.* To this is added, for the increase in the value for the fourteen years to 1856, 56 per cent., or at the rate of 4 per cent. per annum, making the annual value of fisheries in Great Britain in 1856, as estimated, 91,907*l.*

For the estimate of the real property in Ireland, this has been taken at one-third of the same in Great Britain, which is probably, at present, a high estimate for Ireland.

For the estimate of the personal property in Great Britain and Ireland, the dividends on the public debt have been taken as paid in 1856. No allowance has been made for the dividends under the yearly value of 20*s.*, proposed to be exempt from this tax from the difficulty of obtaining the necessary information with any reasonable degree of accuracy; but as the amount of this allowance must be very inconsiderable, every one may make this allowance according to his own fancy.

The estimate for railways is taken from the statement of the railway accounts to the close of the year 1856, compiled by Mr. Yeats. According to this statement, the total capital of the 136 railways in the United Kingdom open for traffic in 1856, amounted on the 31st of December, 1856, to 295,708,737*l.*, of which the sum of 248,773,671*l.* belonged to English lines; 32,270,976*l.* to Scotch lines; and 14,664,090*l.* to Irish lines. The amount of dividend, or interest, charged in the year 1856 against revenue was 12,130,861*l.*, or at the rate of 4*l.* 2*s.* 0½*d.* per cent. The traffic receipts for the year 1856 amounted to 21,853,025*l.*, and the working expenses to 10,311,954*l.*, or 47·18 per cent. The traffic receipts on the English lines amounted in 1856 to 18,613,832*l.*, and the working expenses to 8,850,423*l.*, or 47·54 per cent. On the Scotch lines the receipts amounted to 2,209,229*l.*; and the working,

and other expenses, to 1,041,794*l.*, or 47·15 per cent.; and on the Irish lines the receipts amounted to 1,029,964*l.*, and the working expenses to 429,737*l.*, or 41·72 per cent., which latter does not include Government duty on passengers, because none is charged on Irish railways. The reason for this distinction is not apparent; but by the proposed plan of taxation, of course, the passengers' duty on all railways would be abolished.

The length of railway in England and Wales open on the 31st December, 1855, was 6,217 miles; in Scotland, 1,091 miles; in Ireland, 987 miles.

These may be taken as a pretty close approximation to the actual results; and it may be reasonably assumed that there will be, for at least many years to come, yearly increasing results.

For a correct estimate of the yearly dividends payable for all the canals of the kingdom, the materials are not easily to be obtained.

For the estimate as here made, the canals are taken as assessed in 1842, in England, Wales, and Scotland, as of the annual value of 1,307,094*l.* To this is added for the increase in the value for the fourteen years to 1856, 14 per cent.; or, at the rate of 1 per cent. per annum, making the annual value of the dividends for all the canals in Great Britain, in 1856, as estimated, 1,490,087*l.*

For the canals in Ireland no estimate has been obtained, and, therefore, it is taken, at a guess, at 100,000*l.* a year. Mr. Porter, in the "Progress of the Nation," says, that there are only about 300 miles of canals open in Ireland, and the chief are, the Grand Canal, the Royal Canal, and the Ulster Canal.

The estimate of the yearly dividends payable by other Joint Stock and Public Companies, and of all other rateable property in the kingdom, is taken in round numbers at 60,000,000*l.* The materials for

making a tolerably accurate estimate are no doubt to be found, and these, when all collected together, will probably show that the sum here taken is not exaggerated. But this, it must be admitted, is the least certain of all the estimates, and requires for its support further evidence than has yet been obtained. For the present purpose, however, this general outline may be sufficient to show that the property proposed to be taxed, and the rate proposed to be levied thereon, would be ample for raising the required revenue; and also to justify a well-grounded expectation that in the first seventh year after the imposition of this tax, when the whole country, relieved from the pressure, and depressing effects, of the present system of taxation, would have sprung up as into a new existence, producing from all its present resources enlarged, and from new sources then developed, an amount of national wealth never before known, and spreading amongst the people an extent of prosperity and a share of rational comforts, by them never before enjoyed;—and when the new valuation would be made, and the new rate fixed, the immense increase of realised property, liable to taxation, would enable the necessary revenue of the State to be raised by a rate considerably less than the proposed rate of 4*s.* in the pound, required at starting.

But it is not so much the object to fix the present rate, as to show that a rate of 4*s.* in the pound would be sufficient for the present purpose, and would be, in all probability, the *maximum* rate ever required to be levied, and more than would be long required for raising the necessary revenue.

The next, and only new tax to be levied (and this not entirely new, as something of the same sort is already levied on male servants), is the tax formerly known in this country by the name of

CAPITATION TAX.

In the different poll taxes which were levied in England during the reign of William III., the contributors were, the greatest part of them, assessed according to the degree of their rank, as dukes, marquises, earls, viscounts, barons, esquires, gentlemen, the eldest and youngest sons of peers, &c.

All shopkeepers and tradesmen worth more than 300*l.*, that is the better sort of them, were subject to the same assessment, whatever might be the difference in their fortunes, their rank being more considered than their fortune. Serjeants, attorneys, and proctors, who in the first poll tax were assessed at 3*s.* in the pound of their supposed income, were afterwards assessed as gentlemen.

Capitation taxes, if proportioned not to the supposed fortune, but to the rank of each contributor, become altogether unequal; the same degree of fortune being frequently unequal in the same degree of rank.

Such taxes, therefore, in all attempts hitherto made to render them equal, have become altogether arbitrary and uncertain; and in all attempts to render them certain, and not arbitrary, have become altogether unequal. Let the tax be light or heavy, uncertainty is always a great grievance. In a light tax a considerable degree of inequality may be supported; in a heavy one it is intolerable. But in the assessment of a tax not very heavy, a considerable degree of inequality has always been found less insupportable than any degree of uncertainty.

In England the different poll taxes were never popular, and never produced the sum which had been expected from them, or which it was supposed they might have produced, had they been exactly levied.

In France the capitation was levied on the highest orders of people, according to their rank, by an invariable tariff, and on the lower orders of people, according to their supposed fortune, by an assessment which varied from year to year. In France the high ranks easily submitted to a considerable degree of inequality in a tax which, so far as it affected them, was not a very heavy one, but could not endure the arbitrary assessment of an intendant; and the inferior ranks suffered patiently the usage which their superiors thought proper to give them. In France, therefore, the capitation, whether popular or not, always produced the sum expected from it.

The mild Government of England, when it assessed the different ranks of people to the poll tax, contented itself with what that assessment happened to produce; and required no compensation for the loss which the State might sustain, either by those who could not pay, or by those who would not pay (for there were many such), and who, by the indulgent execution of the law, were not forced to pay. The more severe Government of France assessed upon each generality a certain sum, which the intendant must find as he can.

Capitation taxes, so far as they are levied upon the lower ranks of people, are direct taxes upon the wages of labour, and are attended with all the inconveniences of such taxes. But these taxes are levied at little expense, and, when rigorously exacted, afford a very sure revenue to the State.

Now it is proposed to fix this tax equally, and lightly, upon all, as an acknowledgment, and compensation, for the protection to the person, extended by the State, equally to all. Property not being taken into consideration, the person, and not the property, will be assessed; and the protection being extended equally to

all, and that being assumed to be equally valuable to all, it seems only reasonable that the tax should be paid equally by all.

It then only remains to be determined, from what period of life this tax should be payable, and the amount.

It is proposed that the tax should become payable at the age of fourteen, and that the amount should be 1*l*. All under that age to be free, but all of that age, or upwards, to be liable, and to continue liable, to the payment of this tax, yearly during life. This limit, fixed upon for the age, is arbitrary, and cannot be otherwise; but it is not unreasonable; most of the working classes at that age, and much earlier, being engaged in profitable employment; and most of the middle and higher classes preparing to qualify themselves for more profitable employment.

As there is no reason on the present occasion for any deferential distinction in favour of the fair sex, all classes, of both sexes, therefore, are to be held liable to this tax, at and from the age of fourteen years, and all under that age are to be exempted.

But there is another class which must also be exempted, and that is, unfortunately, a large and afflicted class, comprising all persons supported by parish relief, and all idiots, lunatics, and persons of unsound mind, who are incapable of supporting themselves.

The amount expected to be raised by this tax is a question not easily answered. But there are some data for this calculation.

Taking the population of the United Kingdom, in round numbers, at 30,000,000 on the 31st of December, 1856, and assuming that one-third of these are below the age of fourteen years, and allowing one-third more for the afflicted class of exempts, the question is narrowed to 10,000,000. If, of these 10,000,000, 25 per

cent. be written off for bad subjects, and bad debts, this still leaves, for available revenue, 7,500,000*l*.

The population of the United Kingdom was estimated in 1851 as follows :—

England and Wales	17,927,609
Scotland	2,888,742
Islands in the British Seas, including the Channel Islands and Isle of Man	143,126
Ireland	6,552,385
	<u>27,511,862</u>

In Great Britain, the numbers living are only given at quinquennial periods, and they stand thus :—

In England and Wales, under the age of fifteen years	6,353,823
„ Scotland „ „	1,028,810
„ British Islands, including the Channel Islands and Isle of Man „	48,909
„ Ireland, under the age of fourteen years .	2,145,312
Total in the United Kingdom	<u>9,576,854</u>

These estimates seem to justify the numbers here taken, if the increase for the five years to 1856 inclusive be added.

As all experience, at least in this country, has proved the difficulty of collecting a capitation tax, some special consideration is due to the

MODE OF COLLECTION.

For the purpose of insuring the payment of this tax by all of that class called artisans, workmen, or labourers, it is proposed that every householder, manufacturer, or other person, should make a yearly return of the names of all persons in his, or her, employ, of the age of fourteen years and upwards, as well as of all the members of his, or her, family, and of all lodgers, or others, residing in

his, or her, house, and that every householder, manufacturer, or other person, should be held liable; in the first instance, for the payment of the said tax of 1*l*. per head for each and every such person, being members of his, or her, family, or residing in his, or her, house as a lodger, or otherwise, or being in his, or her, service, or employment, whether residing in his, or her, house, or not; and that all usual, and proper, powers should be given for compelling the payment of such tax, in the first instance, by such householder, manufacturer, or other person, who are to be at liberty to deduct all such payments out of the salaries or wages payable by them to the persons so employed, or to compel the repayment of the said tax by them, or by such lodger, or other person, or persons, residing in his, or her, house. But that every person, liable to pay the said tax, should be compelled to pay the same by process of law, if not paid in due course as aforesaid, or otherwise.

By such stringent compulsory powers there seems no reason to doubt that this tax might be reasonably enforced, and collected, throughout the kingdom; and that such a tax would be, for the most part, cheerfully borne, and readily paid, by the people, especially when they came to find, from experience, that they were relieved from that heavy and oppressive burden of taxation which, though unseen by the lower and working class, is now so severely felt by them all, and by every other class in the country.

As an additional inducement, and, in an enlarged view, in every respect a most wise and proper concession to the people, the receipt of the tax-collector for this tax might be made the only, and sufficient, evidence of title and qualification for every male person to vote for the return of members to Parliament, if accompanied with a certificate of baptism, showing the age to be twenty-one years, or upwards.

STAMPS.

Under this head the only stamps proposed to be retained, for the purpose of revenue, are the following, here set forth, with the amount produced by each in the year ended 31st March, 1856: —

	£	s.	d.
Bankers' Notes	6,152	3	4
Bills of Exchange	444,599	10	8
Cards and Dice	12,327	8	0
Composition for the Duties on the Bills and Notes of the Banks of England and Ireland, and of Country Bankers	57,722	6	11
Gold and Silver Plate	63,562	0	8
Newspapers and Supplements, and other Papers	255,542	8	8
Receipts and Drafts	257,630	14	8
	<u>£1,097,536</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>11</u>

POST OFFICE.

This, as already observed, is considered to be not a legitimate source of revenue. It is therefore proposed that the whole produce of the Post Office should be expended in that department, in extending, as far as possible, the facilities for the despatch and delivery, both at home and abroad, of all letters, packages, and money orders; and establishing, as soon as possible, one uniform penny postage over the whole world. By what simple and easy means this very desirable object might be effected, if only a decimal coinage were established by law, as it ought to be, in this country, has been fully and clearly shown in a pamphlet, recently published,

entitled "Suggestions for the Renewal of the Bank of England Charter, and for a Decimal Coinage." It is there shown how this desirable object might be accomplished, not only without any inconvenience or loss to the Post Office, but with every reasonable prospect of greatly increased gains; and with certain and great benefits to the public.*

CROWN LANDS.

The following are the receipts, from the official accounts under this head, for the year ended 31st March, 1856:—

	£	s.	d.
Amount collected by the several receivers of the			
Land Revenue in England and Wales, Ireland			
and Scotland, Alderney and the Isle of Man .	288,186	15	4
Rents and casual Revenues	22,758	16	10
Sale of old Materials, &c.	3,670	1	9
Sales of Bark, Timber, and Offal Wood, Gale			
Rents, and Rents for the temporary occupation			
of Lands intended for planting	107,099	7	2
	<u>£421,715</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

Here is a source of revenue which, under proper management and control, might be made much more productive; but this revenue, such as it is, and whatever it may be, will still continue to be a contribution to the State.

* "Suggestions for the Renewal of the Bank of England Charter, and for a Decimal Coinage. By Charles Tennant. London: Chapman and Hall, 193, Piccadilly. 1856."

No. 9—Page 38.

MISCELLANEOUS.

These, as already given from the official accounts, produced, for the year ended 31st March, 1856, 1,158,147*l.* 19*s.* 8*d.*; and would still continue to form part of the revenue of the State.

Thus, the whole revenue of the kingdom, under the proposed system of "TAXATION AS IT OUGHT TO BE," would be comprised in the following

SUMMARY OF REVENUE.

1. Property Tax, as estimated	. . . . .	£58,431,022
2. Capitation Tax	. . . . .	7,500,000
3. Stamps as received, 1856	. . . . .	1,097,536
4. Crown Lands	. . . . .	421,715
5. Miscellaneous	. . . . .	1,158,147
		<hr/>
		68,608,420
Deduct Cost of Collection at 3 <i>d.</i> in the Pound, or 25 <i>s.</i> per Cent.	. . . . .	857,605
		<hr/>
Total Net Revenue		<u>£67,750,817</u>

Now, to anticipate, and answer, the objections to the proposed system of direct taxation, on the ground of the often heard complaint of the heavy burdens on land, it may be useful to inquire into the ground of this complaint, under the proposed system of direct taxation, and under the present mixed system of direct and indirect taxation.

For this purpose, taking only the *direct* charges, and without attempting any nice distinctions, the case may, perhaps, be considered as fairly presented on both sides in the following

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT, SHOWING THE BURDENS
ON LAND AND HOUSES, ETC., UNDER THE PROPOSED
SYSTEM OF DIRECT TAXATION, AND UNDER THE
PRESENT SYSTEM OF DIRECT AND INDIRECT TAXA-
TION.

UNDER THE PROPOSED SYSTEM OF DIRECT TAXATION.

Property Tax on Manors, Lands, and Houses, Woods, Underwoods, and Fisheries . . .	£36,886,913
--	-------------

UNDER THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF DIRECT AND INDIRECT TAXATION.

Stamps on Deeds and other Instruments, estimated at one-half of the whole gross amount, 1856 . .	£ 616,266
Legacies and Successions, estimated at two-thirds of the whole gross amount, 1856 . . .	1,141,857
Assessed Taxes, Inhabited Houses, 1856 . . .	728,970
Additional 10 per Cent., by Act 3 Vict., c. 17 . .	72,897
Land Tax on Land and Tenements, the whole gross amount, 1856	1,161,201
Income Tax under Schedules A and B, net amount for the Year ended 31st March, 1856, as estimated (the gross amount not given)	7,579,728
	<u>£11,300,919</u>

This shows a difference, in favour of the present system, over the proposed system of taxation, as bearing on land and houses, of 25,585,994*l.* per annum.

But this is the apparent, not the real, difference.

When, in addition to the direct charges, all the indirect charges are brought into the account, as bearing on land and houses, the real difference will be seen.

This is attempted to be shown in the following debtor and creditor account between direct and indirect taxation, as bearing on land and houses, and though it is not given with any pretension to perfect accuracy, which is an impossibility, yet it may be a sufficiently near ap-

proximation to accuracy to show that the complaint in question is wholly without foundation.

DIRECT TAXATION IN ACCOUNT WITH INDIRECT
TAXATION AS BEARING ON LAND AND HOUSES.

Dr.

Cr.

	£		£
To difference in favour of Indirect Taxation, as affecting Land and Houses	25,585,994	By Stamps on Deeds and other Instruments, as estimated at one-half of the whole gross amount in 1856.	
Balance in favour of Direct Taxation	16,150,925	— Abolished	616,266
		By Legacies and Successions, as estimated at two-thirds of the whole gross amount in 1856.—Abolished	1,141,857
		By Assessed Taxes, Inhabited Houses, 1856.—Abolished .	728,970
		By Land Tax.—Abolished .	1,161,201
		By Income Tax under Schedules A and B, net amount, 1856, as estimated (gross amount not given).—Abolished .	7,579,728
		By Poor Rates, reduced one-third, as estimated .	2,508,897
		By Increase in Rents from Land and Houses, within the first ten Years of Direct Taxation, as estimated at 15 per cent. on the present estimated yearly value .	28,000,000
	41,736,919		41,736,919

From this account it appears, that the balance in favour of direct, over indirect, taxation, as affecting land and houses, is 16,150,925*l.* per annum.

In this statement the taxes abolished, for which credit is taken, are the gross amounts received for the year ended 31st March, 1856, as given in the Government Finance Accounts for that year; with the exception of the income tax under Schedules A and B, which is given, as estimated, at one-half of the net produce for the year ended 31st March, 1856, the gross amount of the separate schedules for that year not being given; and the poor rates, for the estimated reduction of one-third of which credit is taken, are on the average amount for England and Wales only for the last forty years;

and the expected increase in the rental of land and houses in the United Kingdom, within the first ten years from the adoption of free trade and direct taxation, is estimated at only 15 per cent. on the present estimated annual value; and yet, on these data for the ground work, the result is 16,150,925*l.* per annum in favour of direct, over indirect, taxation!

In these estimates no credit is taken for improvements to be expected in the moral and social condition of the country; for these, though mostly to be valued of all, are beyond all calculation.

But if the question be viewed simply on the returns from Customs and Excise duties, and income and property tax, the result will be equally striking and conclusive. Thus

The net produce of the Income and Property Tax (the gross produce is not given) for the Year ended 31st March, 1856, according to the Finance Accounts, No. 252, was	£15,159,457
---	-------------

Suppose one-half to have been paid by Land under Schedules A and B	£7,579,728
Add Land Tax	1,161,201
	<u>£8,740,929</u>

The net produce of the Customs and Excise Duties in the same year was	£41,845,935
--	-------------

To which the following were contributions:—

Coffee	£ 587,636
Malt	6,676,349
Spirits	10,350,478
Sugar	5,227,055
Tea	5,802,086
Tobacco and Snuff	5,006,698
Wine	1,965,479
	<u>£35,615,781</u>

Thus, there were levied, on articles of general consumption, in the year 1855-6, nearly five times as much as from all the land in the kingdom; and the duties on three articles only, viz., coffee, sugar, and tea, amounting to 11,616,777*l.*, exceeded the contribution of real property to the income tax by 4,037,049*l.*

If to the net produce of Customs and Excise duties were added the cost of collection — interest and profit on capital employed in payment of such duties, losses sustained by restriction, or prevention, of trade, diminished employment for the industrial classes, and other incidents — it would be seen that the actual burden is more than double the sum that finds its way into the Exchequer. In other words, the present system of indirect taxation, to realise 1*s.* for the Government, makes the country pay, directly and indirectly, in costs and losses, about 2*s.* 6*d.*!

It is also to be remembered that the effect of the duties on corn, flour, meal, butter, cheese, eggs, &c., is to increase the price of all home-grown produce of the same description by, at least, the amount of the duties on the foreign produce, and that such duties are, therefore, to all intents and purposes, protective duties.

If the question be regarded in this point of view, simply between the present mixed system of direct and indirect, taxation, as affecting all the property of the kingdom, the balance in favour of direct taxation will be seen in the following debtor and creditor account:—

DIRECT TAXATION IN ACCOUNT WITH INDIRECT TAXATION AS AFFECTING THE PROPERTY OF THE KINGDOM GENERALLY.

Dr.

Cr.

	£		£
To Property Tax, as estimated . . .	58,431,022	By Customs' Duties, net.—	
To Capitation Tax . . .	7,500,000	Abolished	23,312,797
To Stamps, as received, 1856 . . .	1,097,536	By Excise Duties	17,632,138
To Crown Lands, 1856 . . .	421,715	By Stamps	7,063,610
To Miscellaneous, 1856 . . .	1,158,147	By Assessed Taxes	1,978,553
To Cost of Collection at 3d. in the Pound, or 25s. per cent.	867,605	By Land Tax	1,157,525
		By Income Tax	15,159,487
		By Post Office	2,767,201
		By Crown Lands	421,715
		By Miscellaneous	1,158,147
		By Cost of Collection of Customs and Excise Duties, as given in the Government Finance Accounts.—Saved	2,578,069
		By additional cost of Collection of the whole Revenue, as estimated.—Saved	7,055,214
		By Superannuation and Compensation Allowances and Pensions for Customs and Excise, as given in the Government Finance Accounts.—Saved	350,063
To Balance in favour of Direct Taxation	105,298,038	By extra Profit to Traders for the advance by them of the Customs and Excise Duties, enhancing the Price of the first Cost of all taxed Articles 25 per cent.—Saved	10,211,484
		By Allowances, Drawbacks, Fraud, and Negligence.—Saved	2,042,296
		By Expenses of Prosecutions for Smuggling, and other Breaches of the Revenue Laws, and Expenses of maintaining and transporting Persons convicted.—Saved	408,459
		By Augmentation of Poor Rates.—Saved	2,508,897
		By Loss and Injury to the Manufactures and Trade of the Country, as estimated.—Saved	51,057,419
		By Loss and Injury to the Landed Property of the Kingdom, as estimated.—Saved	28,000,000
			174,764,063
			174,764,063

From this debtor and creditor account, it appears that by the adoption of the plan of taxation here proposed, an annual saving to the country would be effected of upwards of one hundred millions. The estimated ex-

penditure of Great Britain in the late war saved in one year! If we have acquired nothing else, we have acquired wisdom; and bought it cheaply, if such be the result.

To superficial observers, this will no doubt appear a very exaggerated statement; but when carefully examined in all its details and bearings, it will probably be found to be under, rather than over, a true estimate of the results to be expected.

But this is only an estimate of financial results. The moral results to the people of this country, and to all other people of the civilised world, are beyond all human calculation; but are worthy of the deepest reflection.

The strong desire generally expressed for the equalisation of taxes arises from every man thinking himself more burdened than his neighbour. But this is a narrow view for forming an equitable system of taxation.

The landed property of every country, as already observed, ought to be regarded as the *basis* of its wealth and strength, as a nation; and the *yearly market value* of the produce of that property should always form the ground work for taxation.

It is a narrow and most erroneous view, too common amongst landed proprietors, to suppose that, by throwing the burden of taxation upon the productive industry of the country, they are thereby relieving the land from that portion of the burden. This is a superficial and short-sighted view of the question, as will be seen if the true causes of the value of land be looked into a little more deeply. Look back, only twenty years ago, to the unpeopled lands of Australia, or the remote parts of Canada, and what was then the value of land there, without population or trade? As valueless as the deserts of Arabia. And what has raised these lands to

the present high prices but the great and rapid increase of population and trade?

Now, if such have been the effects, in so short a time, of population and trade in those remote countries, with an almost boundless extent of still unoccupied land, how incalculably greater must be the same causes, operating to produce the same effects every year, in this country, with the population and trade already existing, and so much more rapidly increasing, and where the extent of land is, and ever must be, so limited?

In this point of view, it will be seen how dependent the value of land in this country must ever be on the continued increase of population, and the prosperity of trade and manufactures, and how much it is for the interest of the landed proprietors to bear such a proportion of the necessary taxation as may continue to encourage, and still further to extend that, which is all they ever can extend. What must be the increased value of the landed property of this country ten years hence, even at the present rate of increase? And what may be expected to be the increased value *then*, if the pressure upon the means of subsistence be *now* removed, by the removal of all impediments, by the adoption of a system of internal, and international, free trade?

What a world of misconception, and of malignant passion, would be saved, were taxes laid ostensibly, as well as virtually, upon the owners of realised property! What a practical reconciliation it would effect between the wealthier and the poorer classes, were taxes universally removed from the necessities of life, and universally laid so as to affect only unquestionable luxuries! As the late Dr. Chalmers said, "What a death-blow would be thus inflicted on the vocation of demagogues! What a sweetening influence it would have on British society, after the false medium was

dissipated, through which the high and the low now look on each other as natural enemies!"

It was the opinion of the same good and right-minded man, that if "the whole of our public revenue were raised by means of a territorial impost, it would ultimately add nothing to the burden which now lies on the proprietors of the land; and that they, when fighting against such a commutation, are fighting in defence of an imaginary interest;" as he then suspected they were, and as since proved they were, when they resisted the abolition of the corn laws. Such a political economy as this, had it preceded, would also have superseded, all those tempestuous politics of that time.

This is the enlarged view which should be taken by all statesmen in directing the legislation of this country, and if this principle were firmly relied upon, and fully carried out, the results would soon dispel all fears for the consequences, and then all classes would soon find out that their true interests were identically the same, and inseparable.

If the landed aristocracy, instead of their blind resistance to all innovation, and their tenacious adherence to what they imagined, but falsely imagined, to be their own indispensable interest, had paid all taxes, and left all trade unfettered, so far as human actions can be calculated upon by human motives, it may be confidently said, that no political sacrifice would have been required of them, and they would have remained in the undisturbed possession of their natural, their rightful, inheritance, as lords of the commonwealth. But the democracy of England, fired by a sense of injury, made head against them, and wrested from them by force, what ought to have been freely, and willingly, conceded in the spirit of an enlightened policy. May the landed aristocracy take warning from the past, for the protection of their natural and lawful rights for the future!

There yet lies before them a noble field of improvement in rightly shifting the burden of taxes, in emancipating trade, and that without reserve or limitation; above all, in providing—amply and liberally providing—both for the Christian, and literary, education of the people.

In considering the direct burdens upon land under the present system of taxation, it is scarcely possible to estimate the losses indirectly inflicted upon land, by the manifold injuries which this complicated, and expensive, system directly inflicts upon trade. But it is clearly to be seen that, if these injuries to trade be removed, the relief to land will be greater than the whole amount of taxation which it now bears. The local taxation upon land is out of the question, for, in either case, that remains the same, unless, as before noticed, the burden of the poor rate be reduced, which may be confidently relied upon as one, and not the least, of the beneficial results to be expected.

By local taxation are usually meant, taxes levied in particular districts of the country, and expended for the purposes of those districts. The existing taxes of this description in England and Wales are thus enumerated in the report of the Poor Law Commissioners on local taxation in 1843.

“Rates of independent districts:—

“Poor rate series—taxes on the basis of the poor rate.

- “1. Poor rate.
2. Workhouse building rate.
3. Survey and valuation rate.
4. Jail fees rate.
5. Constables rate.
6. Highway rate.
7. Ditto additional rate for purchase of land.
8. Ditto additional rate for law expenses.
9. Lighting and watching rate.
10. Militia rate.

“Miscellaneous taxes. — Each on an independent basis.

- “ 11. Church rate.
- 12. Ditto for new churches and repairs.
- 13. Burial-ground rate.
- 14. Sewers rate.
- 15. General sewers tax.
- 16. Drainage and enclosure rate.

“Rates of aggregated districts:—

“County rate series. — Taxes imposed originally on aggregated districts by some general authority, but ultimately assessed on the basis of the poor’s rate.

- “ 17. County rate.
- 18. Ditto for lunatic asylums.
- 19. Ditto for building shire halls.
- 20. Burial of dead rate.
- 21. Hundred rate.
- 22. Police rate.
- 23. Borough rate.
- 24. Watch rate in boroughs.”

To which may be added,

- 25. Health of towns rate.

Thus it appears that the local taxes leviable in England and Wales, and most of which may be considered as direct burdens upon land and houses, are twenty-five in number.

But these, however, are not twenty-five separate collections, some of these rates being furnished from the funds of other rates; some being incapable, or too difficult, of collection, and some being required only on a few occasions, or in limited localities.

There are no means of forming an accurate estimate of the local sums annually raised under the various rates

enumerated above, but it is certain that their aggregate amount must be very large, and probably does not fall short of 12,000,000*l.* a year for England and Wales. If to this be added the local taxation of Scotland and Ireland, the aggregate amount of the local taxation of the United Kingdom cannot be under 14,000,000*l.* a year.

This vast amount of local taxation is a very important feature in the economical condition of the kingdom.

The Poor Law Commissioners estimate that, in England only, no fewer than 180,000 individuals are connected, one way or other, with the levy of the local taxes. Many of these render their services gratuitously; but vast numbers are paid, some by salaries, and some by a per centage on the sums collected. And there are good grounds for thinking that, in many cases, the accounts of the parties so employed are not subjected to any very efficient check or control, and that, consequently, there are many opportunities for abuse. But the point of paramount importance, in the reform of local taxation, is the selection of a proper and invariable basis on which to raise the assessment; and this, as before observed, should be by one uniform valuation, and only *one* assessment for all real property, which should form the basis of all local and national taxation on real property throughout the kingdom.

The purposes to which the local taxes are lawfully applicable (amounting to about 200) are so numerous and various, that a detailed catalogue would be tedious, and a general description almost useless. The names of the rates, as here given, usually indicate, with sufficient distinctness, the primary purpose of each; but this primary purpose is not always the only one to which the tax is even by law devoted. The poor rate, by far the heaviest item in the list, is also the most multifarious in its objects; comprising, besides the relief of the poor,

such general measures as the registration of the births and deaths, the vaccination of all classes of the community, the prosecution of certain kinds of criminals, the preparation of the lists of jurymen and parliamentary voters, and so forth. The county rate, again, provides for the repair of bridges, the maintenance of jails, the relief of prisoners, the payment of coroners, the prosecution of felons, and a long list of purposes besides. It may be observed, generally, that the several rates are designed to deal with exigences of a most important public character; and it is, therefore, highly desirable that they should not only be levied with fairness, but also be expended with fidelity. Some of these last few remarks on local taxation are partly taken from the appendix to Mr. M'Culloch's work on Taxation.

The following rentals on real property assessed to the poor rate in 1841, and for the property tax in 1842, in England and Wales, show a striking difference in the valuations made about the same period :—

	Assessed to the Poor Rate. 1841.	Assessed to the Property Tax. 1842.	Difference.
	£	£	£
Landed Property . . .	32,655,137	40,167,088	7,511,951
Dwelling Houses . . .	23,386,401	35,556,399	12,169,998
All other Property . . .	6,498,492	10,079,248	3,590,756
Total	62,540,030	85,802,735	23,262,705

Here is a difference of 7,500,000*l.* upon land; 12,000,000*l.* upon houses; and 3,500,000*l.* upon all other property, on a comparison of rental valuations made nearly at the same time. Now, the average price of wheat for three years prior to the property and income tax, was 67*s.* per quarter; and as the price of wheat is taken as an index of the general value of agricultural

produce, a reduction in price of 25 per cent. reduces the actual rental of the land to 30,125,316*l.*, or 10,041,772*l.* per annum below this assessment to the property tax. How, then, does this affect the taxation of the country? With respect to the poor rate, it is of no consequence whether the rental be high or low, provided the assessment be fairly levied; for this simple reason, that the *amount* demanded for poor rate is fixed, and must regulate the *per centage*; but, with respect to the property and income tax, and all *fixed* taxation, the *per centage* is fixed, instead of the amount, the consequence of which is, that as the *annual value* of rentals diminish, the ratio of taxation is increased in a corresponding degree; for a tax of 1*s.* per pound sterling on 40,000,000*l.* amounts to 2,000,000*l.*; but if the annual rental become reduced in value to 30,000,000*l.*, or 25 per cent., the tax of 1*s.* is increased to 1*s.* 4*d.* per pound on the actual rental. Whereas, if the taxes were collected upon a just estimate of the annual rental, the amount would be reduced to 1,500,000*l.*

It is therefore evident that the first step towards a just system of taxation will be in a thorough revision of the national assessments; and this can only be done on a new valuation of all the real property, founded on the present average price of wheat, and this being so regulated every seven years, would form a sound basis for all local and national taxation on real property throughout the kingdom; or, at least, would remove the absurd discrepancies here exhibited under the present system of different assessments.

These are some of the weighty considerations which must soon force themselves upon public opinion with regard to British taxation. It is evident that the rentals of landed property form half the sum whence the support of the poor is derived, without taking into consideration other charges, of a local and public nature,

raised from the same source. The question, then, is, what effect will be produced upon the rental of lands if the value of agricultural produce should fall 25 per cent., even assuming that landlords reduce their rents accordingly? The claims of the poor would not diminish in the same proportion; nor would the reduction of rent be accompanied by an increase of labour amongst the poor. These objects can be accomplished only by the introduction of foreign produce, and the increase of trade and manufactures; and, without these, the burden of British taxation must every year increase in weight. From this consequence there is no escape. The rental of a country is the *value of its annual produce*. Reduce that, and you diminish the main source of all public and private revenues, while you cannot abate one farthing of your taxation.

In this state of things the landlord and the tax-collector will be contending with each other for the produce of the soil, and the tenant will struggle in vain for the means of subsistence, while the wages of labour will fall to a scale too low to allow the labourer to purchase the highly taxed necessities of daily life; and thus the country will drift into one common gulf of misery and ruin.

These effects will be first seen in Ireland. The people of England are too apt to consider themselves safe against this wholesale ruin. They pride themselves on being a more industrious, and cautious, race than the inhabitants of the "Emerald Isle." But they make this boast without full consideration of their position. It is the centralisation of capital in England from every part of the globe that has hitherto sustained and prevented Great Britain from falling into the depths of misery into which Ireland has been so long plunged. But the reduction of wages, employment, and profits, are signs that Great Britain is slowly drifting towards

that gulf of misery, though the danger is seen, at present, but faintly shadowed forth, or, as the "little cloud arising out of the sea, like a man's hand." But this, however, is certain, that the causes, whatever they may be, which reduce the amount of "profitable wages" paid for British labour, must diminish British wealth and industry, and must increase the amount of British pauperism.

The fact is, we are making British labour pay for every change introduced into our commercial, and agricultural legislation; and, if this system be continued, we must, in the end, pay the penalty due for sacrificing the comforts of the poor, at the shrine of Mammon. Pauperism in this country is becoming an organic, and progressive evil, and, in the purely agricultural parts of the country especially, has increased, and is increasing, under all changes. This is one of the most lamentable effects of our present system of taxation, which increases the cost of living, and with these victims, and the scarcely less pauperised tradesmen of small means in country towns, our gaols are chiefly filled.

So long as this system continues, these consequences must ensue, and must go on increasing; and very small, and slow, and altogether unsatisfactory, must be the beneficial effects of any expenditure on the education of a people who are not receiving fair wages for their labour, and who are deprived of those comforts and enjoyments which they are entitled to expect, and also to demand, in return for their industry, and skill. It was a sound remark of Sir Robert Peel, in his speech on the Income Tax, 23rd March, 1842, that—"If you make a great reduction, not, I would say, in the amount of poor rates, but in the cost of living, on account of which those poor rates have been kept high, those who pay the poor rates will derive considerable advantage from that reduction. I may observe, here, that there has

been a tendency of late years to increase the poor rates on account of the high prices of provisions."

It is impossible under the present mixed system of direct and indirect taxation, to preserve anything like an approximation to equalisation; for it is impossible to obtain even the first figures essential for such a calculation. No one in this kingdom can say how much he is taxed; for no one can, at any time, say, with precision, what is the actual amount of the national burdens. Clearly it is not the nominal amount given in the official accounts, because a great part of that is owing to the State for taxes. It is, therefore, necessary, for ascertaining whether taxes are equally distributed or not, to ascertain, in the first instance, what is the actual amount of taxation. Now, as Mr. McCulloch observes, for this, it is indispensable to deduct, from the apparent amount, all that portion of the taxes which is paid by public functionaries, and by those subsisting on the dividends, or interest, of the money lent to the State. The balance of taxation remaining, after this sum is deducted, forms the burden really borne by the public. If A. owe B. on one account 100*l.*, and B. owe A. on another 20*l.*, it is plain that the sum really due by A. to B. amounts to only 80*l.*; and such is precisely the case with the public. The State owes certain sums to certain parties; but those parties have, by means of taxes, to pay certain sums to the State; so that the sum really paid by the latter amounts only to the balance, or difference between the two.

It would, however, be exceedingly difficult, as Mr. McCulloch also observes, or rather, impracticable, to make anything like a fair estimate of what the balance in question may amount to in this, or any other country. Much obviously depends on the nature of the taxation. In this country, where by far the largest portion of the revenue is derived from taxes on articles of consumption,

the sums received from the public functionaries, creditors, and dependents on Government, will, of course, be very much larger, than in countries where the public revenue is mainly derived from direct, and fixed taxes; such as land and property taxes, and the like. But, from the impossibility of ever ascertaining with accuracy the quantity of taxed articles consumed by individuals, or by classes of people, the difficulty of making anything like a fair estimate is so increased, as to become almost impracticable for any useful purpose.

For the same reasons, it is equally impracticable to form a correct estimate of the total, or aggregate income of any extensive country; or a comparative estimate of the aggregate incomes of any two or more countries; and if this difficulty were got over, and the income, population, and taxation of any two countries were known, it would be all but impossible to say which was most, and which was least, heavily taxed.

The same amount of income yields a very different supply of the necessities, and conveniences, of life in different countries; and, supposing other things to be equal, the well-being of individuals obviously depends, not on the amount of their money incomes, but on the amount of necessities, and conveniences, for which those incomes will exchange.

Hence, as Mr. M'Culloch says, supposing the average incomes of the people of two countries amount, before their taxes are paid, to 20*l.* a head; and that the taxes payable in the one amount to 4*l.*, and in the other to 5*l.* a head, we should not be able to say, without further examination, whether taxation were really heavier in the latter, than in the former; for its pressure is to be measured, not so much by what it takes, as by what it leaves; and if the 15*l.* of income remaining to the inhabitants of the one gave them a larger command over necessities and conveniences, than the 16*l.* re-

maining to those of the other, we apprehend it would be correct to say that, of the two, they were the least heavily taxed.

Taxes being, in fact, the transfer of a portion of the property of individuals to the State, the tendency of comparatively high rates of taxation must, undoubtedly, be to produce a lower rate of profit, with inadequate wages, and to drive capital from the country. And though local and peculiar circumstances may counter-vail, for a time, the influence of a low rate of profit in sending capital abroad, that effect is always sure to follow, whenever the fitting opportunity occurs. There is no instance of a country being burdened with comparatively high rates of taxation in which this effect has not been experienced, or from which there has not been an efflux of people and of wealth.

It is, no doubt, true, that an increase of taxation, if not very sudden and oppressive, is most commonly defrayed wholly, or in part, by a proportionally increased degree of economy, industry, and invention. But the tendency to reduce profits, and wages, is still the same. However great the produce of industry, a high rate of taxation necessarily abstracts a large portion of that produce; and, though the condition of those engaged in industrious undertakings in a highly taxed country, may not be worse than when it was less heavily taxed, and may even be very materially improved, every one sees that it would be still better were taxation reduced.

The increased ability to bear the burden is forgotten, and the attention is exclusively fixed on the burden itself. Its influence, and the inconveniences thence arising, are often exaggerated; but all classes become desirous to escape its pressure, or to throw it upon others.

It is also true, that the increased industry and inven-

tion, which an increase of taxation encourages, may, for a time, more than neutralise these effects. But those improved processes, and more economical methods of carrying on industrious undertakings, so occasioned, gradually make their way into other countries, where the burdens falling on the industrious classes are less heavy; and while they improve the condition of those among whom they are thus introduced, they, of course, enable them to become more formidable antagonists of the more highly taxed producers in the markets common to both. The temptation to convey away capital and skilled labour, from highly taxed countries, is thus also progressively augmented; so that the fair inference seems to be, that a heavy rate of taxation, though, if it have been judiciously imposed, it may, for a lengthened period, act as a powerful stimulus to industry and invention in the country subject to its influence, may, not improbably, in the end occasion its decline, and fall.

The discovery of improved processes, and new inventions in the arts, changes in the channels of commerce, and in the value of money, the overthrow of old, and the establishment of new forms of government, the occurrence of wars, and a thousand other events, which it is impossible to conjecture, may vastly increase, or proportionally diminish, the power of countries to bear taxes, at the same time that they may add to, or lessen, their magnitude.

But, whatever may be the fate of a country, subject to a high rate of taxation, it seems impossible to doubt that it operates as a clog on her progress; and that, *ceteris paribus*, it is a source of impoverishment and weakness, and always must so work, with more or less perceptible effect, in the course of time.

This may be sufficient to show, not only the expediency, but also the necessity, for every government and people, if they would guard against the most tremendous

evil which can befall a country, of adopting every just and practicable means for lessening the weight of taxation, and relieving the pressure on the national resources. It is hopeless to expect that this can be done by means of reductions in the public expenditure. Much may be, and, undoubtedly, ought to be done in this way ; but it is a vain delusion to look for any sensible and permanent relief to this country by any such means. The only effectual relief, under the pressure of taxation in this country, must be by making the people better able to bear it, and that can only be by increasing the capital of the country, by relieving trade and manufactures from all restrictions, thereby extending and enlarging industry, and raising the general rate of profits and wages. As a first step to this result, the improvement of the condition of the working classes, by the removal of all taxes from articles of consumption, is essential ; and, in comparison with this, any savings which could be effected by reductions in the public expenditure sink into insignificance.

It is no part of the present scheme to propose a reduction in the salaries, or payments, to public officers, servants, or others employed and paid by the State. But, it is obvious that if the revenue of the State be raised by direct taxes on realised property, these salaries, or payments, might be considerably reduced, without reducing in effect the money value, or purchasable power of such payments. If a public functionary, for example, receive a salary of 1,000*l.* a year, and one-fourth part of this sum be drawn back by taxes on income, and articles of consumption, his real salary is only 750*l.* a year, and that, in fact, is the only cost of his salary to the country. But if all these taxes be removed, his salary is then 1,000*l.* a year, clear, and that is, in fact, the cost of his salary to the country. It, therefore, follows that if 1,000*l.* a year be a sufficient remuneration to such public functionary

under the existing system of taxation, and if such a sum be drawn back for taxes, a salary of 750*l.* a year would be an equal remuneration under the proposed system, and the difference, 250*l.*, would be the yearly saving to the State on this payment. If this were to be carried out as a rule, to be applied without exception, to the salaries of all public functionaries above a certain amount, say, for example, 300*l.* a year, this would include all the Ministers of State, with other high officers of State, their deputies, secretaries, assistants, and many of their clerks; and all the judges, with many of their subordinates and attendants; besides a host of other paid officers and place-holders under Government, and in the Royal Household, far too numerous to be here mentioned; and these altogether would effect a yearly saving to the State of no inconsiderable amount, and much greater than it would be prudent to make known, lest any such suggestion should follow, which would, most probably, be fatal to the proposed new system of taxation, but would, certainly, enlist a very formidable army of opponents against its adoption.

It may be observed, in further illustration, that the cost of maintaining our army and navy establishments is to be measured chiefly by the cost of the various articles required for the supply of the officers and men. If these articles be subject to duties, the cost, and the pay of the officers and men, is increased in proportion to the duties on the quantity of taxed articles. It is obvious, however, that this increase is not at first, whatever it may be in the end, wholly a loss to the State; for, being intercepted by the duties, it finds its way back to the State, and is again re-issued, to be again restored. But this involves the necessity of keeping up all the cumbrous and expensive machinery of our present system of Customs and Excise establishments, with the Preventive service, and all their terrible attendants;

and, after a few re-issues, and restorations, these intercepted duties are either altogether swallowed up, or so far diminished, by the enormous expenses and frauds of these establishments, as to have vanished from human sight, or power of calculation. But if these articles were exempted from duty, it is obvious that the cost of supplying them would be so much less as the amount of the duty, and that the pay of the officers and men might, without injury to them, be proportionally reduced; though any such reduction in their pay is neither to be recommended nor desired.

It is on this calculation of drawback, by taxes on articles of consumption, that Mr. McCulloch estimates the real magnitude of the national burdens at about 25 per cent. under their nominal amount, given in the official accounts. And supposing these to average, including local taxes, about 64,000,000*l.*, the real burden will, on this hypothesis, be about 48,000,000*l.*

But if the present complicated, and inextricably entangled, system were at once swept away, and replaced by a system of direct taxation, we should be perplexed no more by drawbacks, allowances, and repayments; and the Government accounts might then be a simple and plain statement of receipts and expenditure, open and intelligible to every inquirer. We should then be taxed no more for Customs and Excise,—those costly creations for cruelty and crime;—tormented and persecuted no more by Customs and Excise officers;—impeded and injured no more by sufferance wharfs, bonded warehouses, &c.;—free to come and to go,—to buy, and to sell, when, where, and how we like;—to transact our own affairs as we like, without being overhauled, insulted, and defrauded, by a set of ignorant, mercenary, and, for the most part, vicious hirelings,—made vicious by the vicious system of which they are a necessary part;—in short, we should then be free agents,—

free to choose between good and ill,—free to think and to act, and to take the consequences,—the inherent right of every rational human being,—the natural prerogative of reason,—the first step to rational improvement, to religious and moral culture, and mental refinement,—the safest, and only safe, foundation for true patriotism, and loyalty,—for peace, and prosperity to every nation of the earth. Smuggling, that fruitful source of wretchedness, and guilt, and even murder, would then be a word which might be expunged from our dictionaries, as useless. Drunkenness, that fatal folly of the lower orders, fostered by misery, and ignorance, would diminish as their comforts and enjoyments, and intelligence, increased. Trade, expanding with unimpeded growth in the inexhaustibly fertile soil, and genial climate of the British Isles, would spread over all the other nations of the world, dropping the beneficent influences on other soils, for the benefit of other people; and under the blessing of the Almighty, and All-directing Power, this nation and this people, might be permitted to be as a bright beacon, to lead other nations and people, now wandering in the darkness of ignorance, under the yoke of despotism, into the light, and pleasant, paths of peace and plenty, by a free interchange of the special gifts of Providence to each, for the common good of the great, and precious, universal whole.

We might then pray with some hope of our prayer being heard, “Give us peace in our time, O Lord!” We might then hope to avoid the necessity of employing physical, instead of intellectual, or moral agencies, as the only effective means of controlling hostile tendencies, based on ignorance, and prejudice. As wisely observed by a recent writer, in reference to our relations with China; “The peace doctrines of the Quakers, and the efforts of the peace party in British politics, all pro-

ceed from a lack of power to see, that the most civilised nations are still very far from being sufficiently cultivated in their moral faculties, to admit of the efficient substitution of moral, for intellectual, or physical agencies in man's struggles with man."

The plan of raising a portion of the national revenue by a tax on the importation of foreign articles of merchandise, offers at first sight, to superficial observers, so many apparent advantages that, delusive as these are, it is no wonder it should have presented itself, at a very early period, to the minds of those charged with the duty of providing the pecuniary resources of the state. The idea of favouring the home producer; the belief, long prevalent, that the duty would, in reality, fall upon the foreigner; the hope that the importing merchant, knowing that he could ultimately recover it from the consumer, would regard it only in the light of an advance, and would, therefore, not object to pay it; the expectation that the purchaser, to whom it would come only in the form of an undistinguishable element of the total price, would not detect it, or be inconvenienced by it; and the obvious consideration that, as in the great majority of the articles thus burdened, the purchase was entirely optional, and the payment of the tax, therefore, in a manner voluntary; may all have combined to recommend the adoption of those indirect imposts now known by the name of Customs duties, and to have encouraged the increase and development of the system till it has reached its present unexampled magnitude.

There is, however, evidence of the existence of these imposts anterior to the times in which such considerations as the foregoing can be supposed to have had much influence; and, notwithstanding the weight of Sir Edward Coke's opinion to the contrary, it seems probable that they were originally of a common-law character, and that their name of "Customs," or

“Customary” levies, points to their exaction by traditional prerogative. However this may be, their legislative origin cannot be traced back beyond the reign of Edward I., A.D. 1297. In the year 1400 they produced (or rather were let for) the trifling sum of 8,000*l*. In the middle of the seventeenth century, they had reached a yearly average of about 500,000*l*. At the accession of George III. they already yielded 2,000,000*l*.; forty years afterwards, in 1800, the amount levied was about 11,000,000*l*.; and in the year 1856, this sum had increased to nearly 24,000,000*l*.; being an augmentation in the last century of nearly *twelve-fold*.

From the date of our earliest records, there is traceable a progressive tendency towards rendering the tariff lists less and less voluminous. The principal reductions were made, as is well known, by the celebrated tariffs of 1842, and 1845; the latter of which alone removed upwards of 450 articles from the list of dutiable goods; but since that year, and under every government, continuous and decided progress has been made in the same direction.

In 1826	the number of articles	subject to duty	was	1280
„ 1841	„	„	„	1052
„ 1849	„	„	„	515
„ 1853	„	„	„	466
„ 1855	„	„	„	414

But in 1826, and so late as 1842, export duties were levied on five principal articles, with nineteen subdivisions, besides an *ad valorem* duty of one half per cent., chargeable, with a few exceptions, on all other goods exported.

At present, no articles exported to foreign countries are subjected to duty.

The trade of the country has been further facilitated by the great diminution which has taken place in the

number of articles charged with *ad valorem*, and discriminating duties. The latter, in 1855, were only fifty. In 1852 there remained 130 *ad valorem* rates, while the actual list in 1855 contains not more than forty, exclusive of the "unenumerated" articles, which pay from 5 to 10 per cent. on their value.

By the repeal of the Navigation Laws many most vexatious, and complicated, restrictions on the trade of the country were, at last, happily abolished. Any goods may now be imported, in any vessels, and from any country; and ships may now be registered and entered in Great Britain, wherever built or purchased, and however manned. It is impossible to say to what extent the expansion of trade, and the interests of ship-owners have been promoted by this change alone.

It is obvious that, under the existing system of the revenue laws, the commerce of this country could never have attained its actual enormous magnitude unless, to the great enterprise on the part of merchants, had been added a liberal disposition on the part of the State to give every possible facility, consistently with such a system, for the rapid despatch of business. Even the large reductions of duty, which have been sanctioned year by year, would have been rendered comparatively inoperative, if tedious formalities, and needless restrictions on the part of the revenue officers of the executive, had not been, at the same time, greatly mitigated.

It became early apparent that the exaction, immediately on landing, of duties payable on goods which yet might be many months on hand before they were entirely disposed of, was a heavy extra tax upon the importer, and required considerable additional capital to meet it.

The first relief afforded was by the Act of 12 Charles II. c. 13, A.D. 1660, which permitted the merchant to give bond for payment of the duty within nine months, in

lieu of paying at once, and receiving the usual mitigation. In other words, it offered him his choice between nine months' credit or 10 per cent. discount. The obvious inequity and impolicy of levying revenue alike upon articles re-exported to foreign lands, also soon presented itself to the minds of our legislators; and in the same year (by 12 Charles II. c. 4) the exporting merchant was permitted to claim, or "drawback," the *whole* amount of duty which he had paid into the Exchequer, in the case of silk, linen, and tobacco, and *half* the amount in the case of all other articles—a distinction which subsequent tariffs largely modified, and at length wholly swept away.

The "warehousing (or bonding) system," however, with its various branches, has afforded the greatest facility, and has been the greatest practical improvement yet introduced. It allows imported goods to be "warehoused" under due precautions, and for a renewable period of five years; leaving to the merchant the privilege of paying duty only when the goods are removed for actual consumption, or of escaping the payment of duty altogether, by removing them for exportation. The first approach to this improvement is traceable in the year 1700, when the wrought silks of India and Persia (the use of which was prohibited at home) were permitted to be placed in fit warehouses for exportation, on due security being given by the merchant for carrying out such destination. In 1709, pepper was allowed to be deposited in "approved" warehouses, on payment of half "subsidy," the other half being demanded when the article went into consumption, or, in case of its re-exportation, not being claimed at all. In 1742 rum was allowed to be warehoused under Crown locks, and on bond being given for the payment of duty when taken out for home consumption; and shortly afterwards tea, rice, and tobacco were admitted to the same privilege.

A general "Warehousing Act" was passed in 1803, extending the system with a niggard and reluctant hand, both as regards localities and articles. Various subsequent enactments greatly enlarged the privileges and facilities then granted; and in the year 1825, when the Customs Laws were consolidated by Mr. Hume's Eleven Acts, the system had nearly attained its present form and extension. Now nearly every port, of any size in the kingdom, contains licensed warehouses for bonding; and every year new warehouses are thus licensed by the Board, after due examination with reference to the security they offer against fraud, and after taking a bond from the proprietor of the warehouse, in a sum large enough to cover the risks of the Crown on the goods to be deposited therein.

Of course, these valuable privileges were certain to be largely employed, and to give rise, with the expansion of trade, to a demand for a largely increased warehousing accommodation. This has been especially the case in the port of London. In 1850 it was found that the provision afforded by the various docks (to which the Victoria Docks have since been added), extensive as it was, was still quite inadequate to the requirements of commerce; and in February 1851, privileges analogous to those enjoyed by the old bonded warehouses, but subject to varying and special limitations, were granted to certain sufferance wharfs on the south side of the river, which were already in possession of some, though comparatively limited, rights of bonding. Similar privileges were granted in favour of specified localities on the north bank; and, at present, besides the docks and "legal quays," landing privileges are exercised by no less than eighty-seven "sufferance wharfs;" of which thirty-five have bonding warehouses, and fifteen have or may obtain, the privilege of receiving all goods, except silks, tobacco, and goods warehoused for exportation only. Besides these, bonding privileges have been extended

for wine and spirits to private vaults, situated within 500 yards from any part of the river, between London Bridge, and Brewer's Quay—a concession of which the trade has not been slow to avail itself. Already six vaults, capable of holding, in the aggregate, above 10,000 pipes, have been approved, and others are in course of preparation.

It has long been desired, both by the merchant and the Government, to render this country the great commercial emporium of the world—the central rendezvous, where goods of all sorts should come, not only for consumption, but for distribution likewise. To effect this object, a large relaxation of Custom-house regulations has been introduced, so as to facilitate transshipment in our ports, and transit through the country by land, from port to port.

In the ordinary course, it was the practice for such goods to come hither duly entered for exportation only, and—after undergoing the examination necessary to satisfy the officer of the integrity of the transaction, and the nature of the article—to be warehoused to wait a convenient opportunity, on the occurrence of which they were cleared, bond being given for their actual exportation. Under this system a very large transit trade had arisen, which, however, it was thought desirable, and found practicable, to extend. Accordingly, in 1850, regulations were established under which goods may be simply transhipped from the import to the export vessel in the same port, and perhaps lying alongside. In this case, provided the merchandise in question be duly reported as “in transit,” the importer is allowed to take out both his inward, and outward, documents at once, and the goods may be removed direct, as desired, subject—unless fraud be suspected—only to such a trivial examination as may suffice to verify the correctness of the entry for statistical purposes. The few years that have elapsed since this system was established have been

enough to show how great a boon it must have been. The amount of merchandise thus dealt with during the last five years, has been as follows:—

1851, declared value	.	.	.	£2,965,335
1852, "	.	.	.	3,706,662
1853, "	.	.	.	5,278,074
1854, "	.	.	.	5,046,348
1855, "	.	.	.	3,582,664

For 1854-5-6, this is the real, or computed, value; for the three previous years, before the new mode of estimating values was introduced, the figures given are a combination of *official* and *declared* values.

The decrease in 1855 is chiefly attributable to a falling off in the article of spirits hitherto transmitted through Great Britain; but the aggregate increase in the *number* of this class of transactions still continues. The transhipments in London were 1,944 in 1855, and 2,912 in 1856. The number of *packages* transhipped, including a large quantity of the most valuable articles, increased from 250,000 in 1855, to 392,000 in 1856.

In the case of goods which require to be shipped from a different port to that at which they arrived, they are allowed to be forwarded by railway, under such regulations as the safety of the revenue may suggest. A large trade is now carried on in this way between Hull and Liverpool; and instances have occurred of goods being forwarded in transit from Grimsby to Liverpool, and from Hartlepool to Hull; but, up to this date, no other railway company has complied with the specified requirements.

The attention of the Commissioners of Customs has also been directed towards the removal of all troublesome and unnecessary forms in the documentary routine required from masters of vessels and importers, and towards simplifying, facilitating, and expediting such as

could not be dispensed with. The rectification of errors in reports and entries is also made much easier than formerly; and the accommodation—by arrangements made two years ago—by which, in London, bankers cheques might be received, in lieu of cash, for the payment of duties, is very great, as shown by the number of merchants who have availed themselves of this privilege.

The examination of the baggage of travellers arriving from foreign parts has constantly been—and, as long as this system is persisted in, must continue to be—a subject of natural and loud complaint. The Commissioners have, however, shown a laudable desire to mitigate the inconveniences, perhaps, as far as in their power. In many cases, baggage is now examined on board the steamers; but this experiment has been attended with very questionable success, inasmuch as the baggage, when so examined and passed, is no longer under the protection of the Custom-house officers, but is wholly unprotected from the crowd of thieves and costermongers, who on these occasions are ever waiting and watching their opportunities for carrying off their booty, for the prevention of which, the utmost care on the part of the owners, bewildered and helpless in the general confusion of landing, is too often insufficient. Some mitigation, however, has been effected for travellers merely passing through this country to foreign countries, by paying the duty as a deposit at their port of arrival, and receiving an order for its repayment at their port of embarkation. This, however, is but a clumsy contrivance, involving much trouble and delay, and often much vexation. The evils complained of are inseparable from the system.

Many minor facilities, afforded year by year, both to the mercantile and general public, might be enumerated, but those touched upon are the principal, with one

exception, and that a most important one; — the abolition of all gratuities, or fees. The merchant is now subjected to no tax of any sort beyond the actual Customs duty levied by Act of Parliament; whereas, in former days, this constituted only a portion, and sometimes not the principal portion, of the various payments he was called upon to make before he could obtain possession of his goods.

Under the influence of the various circumstances here shortly noticed, — the simplification of the tariff, the reduction of duties, and the improved facilities afforded to merchants and shippers, — the commerce of Great Britain has shown a marvellous increase, and the revenue a still more marvellous elasticity. Between the years 1831 and 1834, the first very extensive steps were taken in the removal of prohibitions, and the reduction and remission of Customs' duties. These were followed in 1842 and 1844 by still bolder advances in the same direction, and every successive year has seen further progress, culminating in the vastly reduced and simplified tariff of 1853. The net aggregate of these reductions amounts to above *ten* millions. Yet, notwithstanding, the Customs revenue has scarcely varied for the last twenty years, ranging steadily from twenty-two to twenty-three millions. In 1835 the gross income was 23,149,000*l.*; in 1855 it was 23,482,000*l.*

In order to produce such a result, it is obvious that, both the industry and the consuming power of the mass of the nation must have augmented in an extraordinary ratio. From the peace of 1815, to the year 1826, the increase of our commerce had been very trifling. The entire imports, as measured by official value, showed no great augmentation, but *fluctuated* about a medium of 33,000,000*l.* The total exports fluctuated in like manner about a medium of 52,000,000*l.* They were 58,000,000*l.* in 1815, and 51,000,000*l.* in 1826. From

that date, however, both branches of commerce took a new start, and have never looked back.

The same encouraging tale of the commercial progress of the country is told by the tables of vessels built and registered at various periods of this century. Thus, the average tonnage annually added was :—

For 1823-4-5	.	.	.	.	98,900 tons.
„ 1833-4-5	.	.	.	.	162,800 „
„ 1843-4-5	.	.	.	.	174,500 „
„ 1853-4-5	.	.	.	.	413,900 „

The Navigation Laws, it will be remembered, were repealed on the first of January, 1850.

In 1854 and 1855, it became necessary to increase the Customs duties on four of the principal articles of consumption, with a view of providing means towards defraying the expenses of the war. The taxes on tea, coffee, sugar, and on rum, imported into Scotland and Ireland, were severally augmented accordingly. The duty on coffee was raised 33 per cent.; the utmost diminution of consumption was only 6 per cent. The duty on tea was raised 17 per cent.; the falling off in consumption was not a quarter per cent. The duty on sugar was raised on the average about 25 per cent., and the price of the article *in bond* rose also upwards of 30 per cent. between 1854 and 1856 : yet the entire difference of consumption in these two years was short of 10 per cent. When it is considered that, in all three articles, the duty forms a very large proportion of the entire cost to the consumer; and, in how trifling a degree this augmentation of the tax affected the use of the articles in question, this must be admitted to be a striking illustration of the continued prosperity, and vast consuming power of the country.

The foregoing observations on the Customs duties and regulations, are taken principally from the Report

of the Commissioners on the Customs, dated 20th February, 1857, which concludes as follows :—

“The great extension of commercial transactions which we have recorded, has entailed its inevitable consequence in an increase of the numerical strength and cost of the Customs Establishment. We have found it necessary to make an addition of 174 officers during the past year, with aggregate salaries of 20,212*l.*; and the increase of 3,000*l.* on the sum paid for extra assistance in 1856, points to the probable necessity of a still further augmentation of the establishment during the ensuing year.”

Thus it appears that the application of free trade reforms has not only been perfectly successful, when tried by the higher and larger tests of their effect upon the trade and general condition of the country, but they have been as strikingly successful as mere measures of finance.

The plea of the necessities of the revenue, is a plea which is never likely to be disregarded in this country, where all are sensible that the calls upon the Exchequer must be fully provided for. But between a financial policy which confines itself within the hard and narrow limits of a restrictive system, and a line of procedure formed on a broader, but not less carefully considered view, not only for the means of maintaining a sufficiency of revenue, but also for the means of obtaining that revenue in a manner the least burdensome to the country, and the least oppressive to the people, there is a great difference.

Important as were the relaxations which occurred at the various dates between 1820 and 1840, still the fact remains, that, prior to 1842, the Customs and Excise continued almost stationary, notwithstanding the increase of population, and the capabilities for larger trade. Then came the change of policy. The narrow

lines of our restrictive system, so rigidly and so long adhered to, were then widened and shortened. The attempt was then made to adjust the mode of raising taxes with some regard to the industrial classes upon which they chiefly fell. The result, as already shown, has been as instructive as salutary. Nothing can be more plainly shown, than the success, as a mere policy of finance, of the free trade reforms.

We find, for example, in 1853, that in spite of large and continuous remissions of duties, the gross produce of the Customs and Excise combined, was already 700,000*L.* more than in 1840. We see, also, that the reduction of duties on articles previously over-taxed, was much more than compensated by an increase of revenue on articles upon which no reduction was made. Upon this ground we can understand (as Mr. Tooke says, in his last valuable work on Prices), how it happened that tea and tobacco in 1853, yielded (even at undiminished high rates) $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions more revenue than in 1840; and that spirits and malt exhibited a similar increase of 2 millions.

The problem, therefore, has become (to use Mr. Tooke's language, with the alteration of only a few words) not merely to raise from year to year a sufficient revenue, but to raise it and at the same time to relieve the pressure of taxes on those parts of the system where they act as pernicious burdens.

It may be true (Mr. Tooke says, It is quite true), that the magnitude of the debt renders it constantly incumbent upon us to provide, at least, some annual surplus towards its reduction; but, if any result be clear in the financial experience of the last fifteen years, it is the result—that the most efficacious sinking fund that can be established, is the release of the industry and skill of the country, as rapidly as possible, from the

pressure of every fiscal burden which operates as a positive hindrance and oppression.

But, it is quite true, as Mr. Tooke adds, and as here given altogether in his own words;—"Our strength and progress consist far more in augmenting the ability of the country to bear the burden of the debt, than in attempting to diminish its magnitude, by retaining taxes which prevent accessions to our ability; and the more rapidly we arrive at an adjustment of taxation so perfect and equitable that, for all practical purposes, it may be regarded (considering its necessary magnitude) as imposing no oppressive burdens on the development of skill and enterprise, the more rapidly we shall arrive at that point where we may, with most advantage and safety, make the reduction of the debt our first and greatest concern; but till then, few inferences, from experience, seem to be plainer than this, namely, that, constantly observing the line of prudence, as regards a full provision for all our engagements, our first duty and our best policy, is to remove fiscal oppressions and inequalities."

The result of all this experience clearly shows that every relaxation of restrictive duties has been immediately followed by an expansion and increase of trade, much more than sufficient to compensate for the loss of the abandoned duties; and that, so sensitive is trade to any restraints upon perfect freedom of action, the removal of any impediments, even in the minutest arrangements of official routine, is attended with immediate and sensible effects to the same end,—the extension and enlargement of trade, with all the necessary consequences of increase in the rate of profits and wages, and of employment and comforts to the working classes.

With such experience of the effects of relaxing only the rigid rules of the present system, what may not be

expected from the total abolition of all restrictive duties, and other impediments to perfect freedom of trade in this country? Even the most sanguine advocate of free trade could hardly have foreseen such vast results, in so short a time, from such small beginnings.

It is, therefore, impossible to calculate, beforehand, what would be the state of trade in a very few years from the date of its perfect freedom and independence. But this is certain, that in the absence of any national calamity from other causes, this country would then be in a state of prosperity and happiness unexampled in any period of its past history; and that the example of this nation would then be like a beacon of light to guide other nations of the world into the same track, that all may be as one nation, with one interest, mutually interchanging, for their mutual benefit, the varied and peculiar gifts bestowed on each by a bounteous Providence, whose gifts are limited by no measure, and who would have all mankind as one people, looking to one and the same God, the giver of all, and for the equal good of all.

This is the first step to the establishment of peace on the firm and sure foundation of one common and equal interest. Nations, like individuals, must learn from experience. They will then learn that in the establishment of peace they are all equally interested, and when people are duly impressed with this, as a fact proved to their own conviction, war will be no longer possible. Year by year they will be learning this through consequences which must convince them of the fact. They will see, in the freedom of trade, the surest means of their own freedom, and worldly welfare, and they will learn to regard the interests of others for the sake of their own, if for no higher and better motives. By these means savage and barbarous people will be first taught to appreciate the comforts of civilisation, and they, in their turn, will become the promoters of civilisation by

the same means. Year by year, under this teaching, the shackles of slavery and serfdom must be loosened, and must, in the end, be allowed to drop off. Slaves and serfs must be set free, because it will be found to be for the interests of all that they should be free. Freedom of trade will be valued, and guarded, with no less jealous care, than the freedom of the press now is in this country. To the freedom of the press we shall owe freedom of trade, and we shall value both equally.

We shall claim and exercise the right to buy and sell, as freely as we now speak and write. We shall learn to respect the grand simplicity of the Divine Commandments, written on tablets of stone by the first Lawgiver, and to submit ourselves more faithfully than we have ever done before, to the Divine spirit of those ancient and eternal laws. We shall learn, through these, to see the wicked injustice, the unwise severity, and the feeble folly, of most human laws; and in the enjoyment of our own natural and lawful rights, we shall learn better to respect the natural, and lawful, rights of others. We shall learn that, what is, in common language, called "accommodating oneself to the prejudices" of individuals, "or showing a prudent respect" for strange customs and peculiar habits of thought, or for moral characteristics of nations, is nothing but a just appreciation of the intellectual and moral development of the individuals, or nations; and the right employment, in each case, of precisely those agencies of civilisation which are fitted to be most effective. The work of legislation will then be comparatively simple, and the line of duty plain. The necessity of making just laws and enforcing them, will then be universally acknowledged and supported, and a vast majority will always compel the observance. The complicated interests of society will then be no longer the miserable excuse

for unjust and oppressive laws ; and Sovereigns, and Governments, will then find their own duties much more easy, and their own positions much more secure ; — they will find their best security in the well-being and contentment of the people ; and the people will find their greatest happiness in the preservation of peace and good order, which left them free to think and to act, in all that concerned themselves alone ; to manage their own affairs, and to enjoy the fruits of their own industry.

The people will then be encouraged to place confidence in sound principles, and they will make laws and regulations for the government of themselves and their affairs, more in accordance with reason and justice, — more consistent with humanity and prudence. They will learn to respect and apply, in the moral affairs of this world, those truths discovered through reason, which, in the physical world, are revealed to us through the laws of nature ; and they will proceed to act with the same confidence in the one as in the other. Thus they will derive incalculable advantages, far beyond the present reach of human foresight. Irreconcilable difficulties, in the present complicated state of human affairs, will then be simplified ; and, by degrees, all will become reconcilable with reason and truth. Freedom of trade being seen to work for the equal benefit of all, will be recognised and established all over the world, with universal consent ; and freedom of thought and action must follow by the same universal assent. The intricacies of the currency question, and all such-like complications of artificial and unjust systems, will disappear, and the wonder of posterity will be in the want of wisdom and foresight of their ancestors. Men will be left more to regulate themselves as rational and responsible creatures ; and things will be left more to the regulation of simple and natural laws. As for example, when free trade is admitted and established as a prin-

ciple, it will no longer be possible to make gold and silver, or anything else, exceptions. The principle, once admitted as a law of nature, will be relied upon with the same confidence. All strange and anomalous distinctions, and irreconcilable differences, must then disappear; and with them will disappear most of the difficulties. Gold and silver will then be bought and sold like every other article of merchandise. Mint price, and market price, will then be known only as a matter of history; and the law which prohibits the Bank of England from purchasing gold bullion at the market price of the day, will be referred to with the same sort of astonishment as we now refer to those laws which prohibited the exportation of our woollen manufactures, or that natural production called "fuller's earth," on pain of death; or which prohibited, under heavy penalties, the importation of corn in times of scarcity. The true character of gold and silver, as articles of merchandise, and as representatives of value in the form of currency, will then be better understood, and the difficulties arising from intricate, artificial contrivances, which now envelop the questions of currency and banking, will then disappear; the truth will then be seen in its simplicity and beauty; and, like the sun emerging from the obscurity of a cloud, will throw light around, making this, and many other objects, now in darkness, clear and distinct. Other improvements would follow, as simple and necessary consequences. As the improvement of the steam engine has led to innumerable benefits to mankind, so would the adoption of the simple principles of reason and truth in all human affairs, lead to innumerable, and far greater, benefits to the whole human race. All mankind would be drawn and held together, by their common interests, as one brotherhood. In all that immediately concerned

their common interests, in the affairs of this world at least, all civilised people, would require to be governed by the same laws and regulations for their common good. Many anomalous and absurd distinctions, which now confuse and distract all parties, and which tend to separate, and to keep apart, people of different nations, would then, by degrees, be swept away; and, though nationalities might be still preserved, yet mutual intercourse, for mutual benefits, would be encouraged; all civilised nations would become amalgamated, as one nation, for one common object, in their common good. For example, they might preserve their own religion, language, national character, form of government, laws, and regulations; but, still, they might agree to adopt, for their mutual convenience, uniformity in the mode of computation, and in all weights and measures. Each nation might retain its own money and nomenclature; but all might agree to reduce it into decimal divisions, for the equal convenience of all. Perfect freedom of action, and even fancies, or the prejudices of long habits, might be preserved; and yet one rule, founded on reason, might govern all, for the equal benefit of all.

And so of weights and measures; each nation might retain its own familiar names, but all might agree to adopt the same decimal divisions for their mutual convenience and common good. Thus, a mutually beneficial intercourse would be encouraged and maintained with all civilised nations; all would contribute, and all would receive; and thus the bond of union would be ever strengthening, and held fast by one common interest. Thus it might be, and thus it surely will be. It is only a question of time. But the sooner the better, for time must always be a question of life and death. We might then hope to see the world governed by more generous principles than it has ever yet been.

We might then hope to see the world full of free nations ; mankind, a great family and household, constituted of self-governing members, related to each other principally by voluntary ties ;—those of affection, and of honour, and of mutual service. We might then hope to see national selfishness perish, and the whole world become a commonwealth of independent nations, with England foremost of the nations in the good work of promoting the spirit of human brotherhood. Let England rejoice to diffuse her own happiness, and her own privileges, among all who are willing to receive them, and fitted to enjoy them ; and we may then be sure that her happiness will be her own reward. We may be sure, the more countries in the world England makes like herself, the more happy, and the more prosperous, will she herself be. Such is the Christian view of the matter ; and so it is even as a matter of worldly interest ; for we shall always gain more by a country's commerce than we shall by its tribute, and an unrestricted interchange of each country's appropriate products and gifts will ever be the most certain source of their mutual benefit.

Such, also, was the view of Dr. Chalmers, already quoted, and frequently referred to, so distinguished as a teacher of the doctrines of Christianity, and known also as a writer on political economy. That the opinion of such a man on such a subject is entitled to the most respectful consideration, no one will venture to deny ; and as this opinion was expressed by him in the conclusion of his last work on Political Economy, it is here given, in his own words, from the volume presented by himself, with an affectionate testimonial, inscribed in his own handwriting, to him who now avails himself of this parting legacy to posterity.

“ We cannot bid adieu to our argument without making the strenuous avowal that all our wishes, and all

our partialities, are on the side of the common people. We should rejoice in a larger secondary, and a smaller disposable, population, or, which is tantamount to this, in higher wages to the labourers, and lower rents to the landlords. But this cannot be effected save by the people themselves; and that, not with violence on their part, or by any assertion, however successful, of a political equality with the other orders of the State. There is no other way of achieving for them a better economical condition, than by means of a more advantageous proportion between the food of the country and the number of its inhabitants, and no other way of securing this proportion, than by the growth of prudence and principle among themselves. It will be the aggregate effect of a higher taste, a higher intelligence, and, above all, a wide-spread Christianity throughout the mass of the population; and thus the most efficient ministers of that gospel, which opens to them the door of heaven, will be also the most efficient ministers of their temporal comfort and prosperity upon earth. Next to the salvation of their souls, one of our fondest aspirations in behalf of the general peasantry is, that they shall be admitted to a larger share of this world's abundance, than now falls to their lot. But we feel assured that there is no method by which this can be wrested from the hands of the wealthier classes. It can only be won from them by the insensible growth of their own virtue."

This opinion will be shared by most readers. It is not desirable, nor is it believed to be desired by many in this country, that anything should be wrested from the wealthier classes; but only that there should be a more equal distribution among all classes of the abundant gifts of nature in all that concerns the necessities and conveniences of civilised life, and that this should be won by the virtue of the people, on the one side, from

the just concessions of the wealthier classes, on the other side, for the increase of wealth, and its only true enjoyment, to all.

That this great object can only be accomplished by the wealthier classes taking upon themselves the burden of taxation for the relief of the poorer classes, thereby bringing the necessities and healthful conveniences of life within the reach of the poorest, and thereby lifting up the lowest to better hopes and higher self-respect, was the opinion of Dr. Chalmers, and the unceasing aim of all his ministry and labour of love on earth. It was this feeling, and this object alone, which, late in life, directed his inquiries into the dry details of political economy, for which, perhaps, he was but imperfectly prepared. But if the natural bent of his mind drew him insensibly into some of the errors of the old Tory principles which prevailed in his days, and in which he was bred up, so much the more weight is due to his opinion when at variance with those principles, and when the dictates of his righteous mind, and loving heart, seem to have emancipated him from the prejudices of his position, and to have added fresh energy and clearness to his fine intellect, and vigorous nature.

Many may think these views are introduced for the purpose of mere embellishment to a dry and uninviting subject, and as little deserving of notice as the visions of an enthusiast; but, however that may be, the facts remain the same, and every candid inquirer must see that the operation of free trade principles is to increase the necessity for proceeding in the same course, until the end in perfect freedom be attained;—that we can only maintain our position as a nation by constant enterprise and vigilance, and that these *must* force us onwards to that end.

That these were the views of Sir Robert Peel in the latter end of his life, whatever may have been his

real opinion in the earlier part of his political career (and many who appreciate the power of his understanding must continue to believe that in the earlier part of his political career his real was always very different from his declared opinion, on this and many other important questions), will be seen in the following communication to the inhabitants of Elbing, in Prussia, in answer to their address to him, approving of his great measure of financial and commercial reform. This document, dated the 6th August, 1846, is so highly creditable to the memory of Sir Robert Peel, and may now be read with so much satisfaction by his admirers, and with so much instruction by all parties, of all opinions, that the whole is here given in his own words: —

“ Your address, in which you express your approbation of the great measure of financial and commercial reform, which I have considered it my duty to lay before Parliament, I have received with great pleasure. The object of the income tax was not only to make good a deficit, but also to lay the foundation of a more just system of taxation, by *putting an end* to duties, before levied on raw materials, as well as those vexatious regulations of the Excise, and the duties on many kinds of produce necessary to the comfort of the working classes.

“ The Bill having for its object the limitation of the paper currency, has in no way affected public or individual interest, nor has the country thereby been deprived of the advantages of paper circulation; but, in placing the issue of this medium of exchange under certain reasonable restraints, the Bill has been the means of checking abuses in times of great critical importance to the commercial interests of the country, as well as of unusual speculation. This Bill has given to paper money a settled value, in making it always exchange-

able with specie. I learn with pleasure that the interest and effect of these measures have been properly appreciated by distinguished politicians of other countries. That part of your address wherein you admitted the principle of commercial legislation, which, by order of Parliament, is now in force, has afforded me, above all this, the most lively satisfaction. The measures proposed for the diminution of Custom-house duties, have been brought forward without any similar concessions having been offered by foreign countries; they have been proposed because the general interest of the country demanded it. Their effects are sufficiently advantageous to fully justify the step we have taken; for it is contrary to the principles of political economy to purchase, at a dear rate, articles of inferior value; and the authors of this measure have thought, without entering into negotiation and minute detail, that the principles of their commercial legislation would be adopted by other nations. Difficulties and obstacles may arise; and financial embarrassment, which appears to be the strongest argument in support of the protective system will, in certain countries, be advanced as a reason for continuing it. Individuals who profit by high duties are favourably listened to by Government; in other cases they form the most numerous part of the population, or, at least, a powerful party in the legislative assemblies.

“Interests are thus represented *en masse*; but this isolated interest cannot long offer resistance to the arguments and manifest interest of the great social body. The public financiers labour under a double disadvantage; first, by the prejudice with which they are regarded, and the consequent support offered to smuggling; and secondly, by the great expenses incurred in its suppression; so that, eventually, it will be seen by those who are responsible for the financial condition of their respective countries, that it is prudent and politic to replace, by such

moderate duties as will permit the commerce, and revenue, of the country to increase, those high duties which either diminish, or altogether prohibit, the importation of foreign produce, and sustain certain branches of trade at the expense of the public finances.

“The social condition of that country which maintains with the greatest rigour the protective system, will be opposed to the state of another which has adopted *liberal* principles, and the conviction of the *value* of such principles will not obtain, unless by the encouragement of the freedom of exchange amongst all the nations of the world; the well-being of each individual will be increased, and the will of Providence will be fulfilled—that Providence which has given to every country a sun, a climate, and a soil; each differing one from the other; but, on the contrary, in order that they may feel their reciprocal dependance by the exchange of their respective produce, thus causing them to enjoy in common the blessings of Providence. It is thus that we find, in common, the means of advancing civilisation, of appeasing jealousy and national prejudice, and of bringing about a universal peace, either from national interest, or from Christian duty.”

It may be interesting to some at this time, to take a further retrospect of the altered views of Sir Robert Peel on these questions, as first declared by himself in Parliament, and to try these by the results of subsequent experience.

The following is an extract from his speech in the House of Commons, on introducing his change of policy in his Customs Acts Bill, 10th May, 1842.

“Speaking generally, we have sought to remove all prohibitions—all absolute prohibitions—upon the import of foreign articles, and we have endeavoured to reduce duties which are so high as to be prohibitory, to such a scale as may admit of fair competition with domes-

tic produce. In cases where that principle has been departed from, and prohibitory duties maintained, there we justify our departure from the rule by special circumstances of the case; but the general rule has been to abolish prohibitions, and to reduce prohibitory duties within the range of fair competition. With respect to raw materials, which constitute the elements of our manufactures, our object, speaking generally, has been to reduce the duties on them to almost a nominal amount. On half manufactured articles, which enter almost as much as the raw material into our domestic manufactures, we have reduced the duty to a moderate amount; and with regard to completely manufactured articles, our design has been to remove prohibition, and to reduce prohibitory duties so that the manufactures of foreign countries may enter into a fair competition with our own. I still entertain that confident belief and expectation which I expressed on first intimating the intentions of Government as to this tariff, that the general result of it will be, if adopted by the House, materially to diminish the charge of living in this country. If you say to me that we do not make sufficient reductions on particular commodities, which are material items in the expenditure of a private family, I am quite ready to admit it, as far as relates to individual articles; but I speak of the general effect of the tariff, as proposed by Her Majesty's Government. If there be any truth in the principles either of trade, or of arithmetic, I contend that its inevitable effect must be, to give great advantages to all classes of consumers, and to make considerable reduction in the present cost of living. Taking the reductions on raw materials, or half manufactured goods, I am persuaded that the general result will be, to make a considerable saving in the expenses of every family in the kingdom."

On the same occasion, to show the delusive character of high duties, Sir Robert Peel said:—"There is another,

and an exclusive ground, on which I vindicate a reduction of the duties on articles of foreign manufacture. I say that these high duties are a mere delusion, that they do not constitute a protection to the British manufacturer, and that, in looking to these duties for protection, he rests entirely upon a fragile and faithless support. The check to their operation is the smuggler. It is a mere delusion to tell the home manufacturer that you levy a duty of 35 or 40 per cent. upon the importation of foreign manufactured articles, if he is robbed of that apparent protection by the importation of the same articles in an illicit way; consequently, I think I can conclusively show that there is no reduction proposed with respect to foreign manufactures, which I cannot vindicate on this single and exclusive ground, that the duty remains at last as high as you can possibly levy it, without calling in the interference of the smuggler."

Again, to show the effect of prohibition in checking improvement, in a debate on a petition presented by Mr. Baring, against the removal of the prohibitions on foreign silks, so far back as 5th March, 1824, Sir Robert Peel said:—"The Honourable Member has said, that in the silk manufacture, Great Britain is inferior to France in point of taste and machinery. Now does not this fact lead to the suspicion that, on account of our prohibitions, the same improvements have not been made in all others? Let those prohibitions be removed, and our taste and our machinery will speedily improve."

Again, the opinion of Sir Robert Peel on the timber duties will now be read with interest. In the debate on ways and means, 23rd March, 1842, he said:—"I am prepared to contend, if the country can make any remission of taxation, that there is not a single article in the tariff upon which a reduction of duty would tell with greater effect in encouraging the industry of the country than the article of timber. . . . The ancient

policy of this country was to encourage the importation of timber at a nominal, or a very small duty, as was recommended by Mr. Deacon Hume. Up to 1795, in the midst of war, the whole duty on foreign timber was only 6s. 8d. the load of cubic feet, the governments of that day considering wood in the light of a raw material, entering into almost every species of manufactures, and, consequently, deeming it expedient that a low duty should be imposed. It was not, therefore, until the hottest of the war, that wood was subjected to increased taxation. Why, then, Sir, is not my proposal in accordance with the ancient principles of our taxation, at the same time that it is calculated to benefit the consumer, and confer a greater benefit on him than he could obtain from the proposition of the right honourable gentleman? I again, then, repeat my conviction, that if I can secure a tax on the property of the country, and reduce the timber duty, I shall do more to restore activity to our trade and commerce, and to benefit the population of the country generally, than by any single measure that I could propose to Parliament. And before honourable gentlemen decide on this point, I wish they would read the evidence, given before a Committee of this House, with respect to fisheries. They will find, by reference to the Reports of the Committees on Import Duties in 1805, and in 1840, that our fisheries are represented to be subject to very great disadvantages in consequence of the existence of this timber duty. I would refer gentlemen particularly to the evidence given by Mr. John Mitchell. Let them attentively consider what he says as to the superiority of the humbler classes of Norway to those of our own country, arising solely from the cheapness of wood. Then, again, I would ask gentlemen to read the evidence as to ship-building. They will find it stated under that head, that the timber duties are acting most injuriously to

the interests of our ship-builders, and that even the trade of the country in ship-building is leaving us on account of the existence of these duties. Therefore, I say that my proposition is one of the best measures for the consumer, the ship-builder, and the country generally, that it would almost be possible for me to propose."

And again, on the same subject, in the debate on the Report on the Income Tax, 8th April, 1842, he said:—"If there be any article which enters more into the common consumption of the people than another, and which ought, if possible, to be exempted from taxation, it is this very article of timber. The proofs which I have laid before me of the effects which the cheapening of timber would produce in the encouragement of local improvements, and in the promotion of the building of bridges and of piers, are so convincing and overwhelming, that it is almost impossible to resist the necessity of reducing the duties on timber. What increased sources of employment will not the measure open to the working classes! We hear of the distress of the shipping interests,—of the immense importance, commercially and politically, of reviving the prosperity of that interest; how can we do so more effectually than by facilitating the purchase of timber? If we enable the ship-builder here to compete with the ship-builder abroad, to how many men shall we not give employment? What vast sources of maritime strength may we not expect to accrue to us! Has not the high price of timber been a great impediment to the construction of houses? Has it not affected the very mode of building? What has been its influence upon the construction of cottages? . . . I take the cottages of the poor in Ireland, and I ask, can any Hon. Member, who has read the evidence laid before the House on that subject, say that that evidence does not contain

the strongest possible proof that no want is more severely felt in Ireland than the want of timber? The high duty also operates most injuriously upon British fishermen. Owing to the better construction of their boats, the foreign fishermen enjoy a monopoly of fishing in deep seas. Reduce the price of timber, and you at once enable our fishermen to compete with them, and thus give the means of employment to a large number of men. . . . By adopting my proposition with regard to timber, we shall increase the demand for productive industry, whilst, at the same time, we shall indirectly increase the revenue."

And again, on the subject of tallow, in the debate on the Soap and Tallow duties, 15th March, 1836, Sir Robert Peel said:—"I will not consent to increase the duty on tallow in the present condition of this country, for many reasons. How can we expect that the portion of our manufactures which depends for success on a foreign market can thrive if we do not permit a reciprocity of commerce; and if, on the contrary, we increase the duty on the raw material in which foreigners are able to pay us? I am not able to perceive any sufficient cause which operates to warrant an exception in the case of Russian tallow to the general rule. The relative position in which Russia stands to this country ought to receive particular attention. She comes very little into competition with our commerce. She does not interfere with our manufactures in foreign markets. She sends us raw material, and takes our manufactured article in return. And were we to raise the duty on tallow, where would be the advantage to ourselves? Unless the proposition extended to foreign oil as well as to tallow, the expected advantages would not result to the agricultural interest; and if the former article were also saddled with a protecting duty, it would have a serious effect on a branch of our manu-

factures that could badly endure it. Candles would inevitably rise in price; and were we to consider how much this would interfere with the means, the comfort, and the remuneration of the hand-loom weavers, who work so many hours by candle-light, we should pause before we created such an additional embarrassment to the extensive branch of manufactures carried on by its assistance. By acceding to such a measure, it is clear that we should interrupt the course of commerce which now happily exists between this country and Russia—should interfere with the market it affords to our present manufactured produce, as well as with the raw material, which supplies an important article for our manufacture—and should also increase the expense of candle-light, so necessary for our manufacturing purposes,—consequences that would not at all repay us for any possible benefit that might immediately result to the agricultural interest.”

On the subject of the Silk duty, in Committee on the Customs Acts, 13th June, 1842, Sir Robert Peel said:—“I cannot deny that the proposed duty upon manufactured silk is high, and I admit that great advantages would result from a reciprocal commercial intercourse between this country, and France. I trust, however, that, looking to the state of the negotiations between France and England, the House will not press the Government too hastily on this point. . . . It would not be well to make concessions to France until an equivalent can be obtained from her.”

On the subject of the inequality of taxation generally, in the debate on the Income Tax, 23rd March, 1842, Sir Robert Peel said:—“Let me ask the House what tax was ever imposed that was not objected to on account of its inequality? What was the beer tax—the house tax—the window tax? What were the assessed taxes when first imposed? Are all these taxes just in every

one's eyes? Must not all taxes, direct or indirect, bear unequally on those who pay them? Take the case of the professional man. I think the professional man may urge good arguments against the justice of the assessed taxes. The owner of what you call permanent capital has the greatest facilities for evading the tax; he can remove to the Continent, and draw his income as he requires it; but the professional man—the lawyer, for instance, or the medical man—is compelled to remain in this country, and to submit to the indirect taxation which prevails.”

Such were the declared opinions of Sir Robert Peel on these questions, and such were the arguments he used for carrying out those measures of state policy on which his reputation, as a statesman and financier, must chiefly rest, and by which he will be most favourably judged by posterity.

In the Customs, the time must soon come when timber, and tallow, must be placed in the free list of raw materials; and such articles of food as, butter, cheese, eggs, and fruits, must also be placed in the free list, which, already, wisely includes all kinds of animals, and animal food. The duties of 15 per cent. on silk manufactures must also soon be remitted; so that, in accordance with the prayer of the Manchester silk manufacturers, the silk trade of this country may stand fairly face to face with foreign competition. The duties on tobacco and wine, especially the latter, will soon force a better adjustment, if only on revenue grounds.

In the Excise, the time must soon come when the duty on paper, yielding net a little more than a million, must be repealed. When the operation of this tax on books and pamphlets is considered in reference to its effect upon society, most persons, probably, will agree with the opinion, that paper is one of the least fitting subjects for taxation by a government desirous of the

improvement, and well-being, of a people; and, that this is one of the taxes which urgently calls for the earliest repeal; notwithstanding, Mr. M'Culloch, who has taken a position of authority on the subject of taxation, says, with respect to the duty on paper, that he "sees no good reason for its repeal." What he considers a "good reason" he does not say. But he immediately afterwards adds, that "the laying of a duty on paper entails a peculiar grievance on the authors and publishers of books; by making them pay a tax on their works, previously to their being brought to market, and before it can be ascertained whether they will sell. It is true, that where the whole impression of a book is sold off at the publication price, the duty on paper, and the *five* copies which the author has to give to public libraries, may be only a moderate deduction from his profits; but this is not the case in *one* instance out of *five*. More than half the books published, and three fourths of the pamphlets, do not pay the expense of publication; and in every such case the duties have to be paid out of the capital of the authors, or publishers. This is rather unfair. If a quantity of tea, or wine, or anything else, be imported, the importer is not called upon to pay any duty unless he sell it for consumption; and if it become unsaleable, or be damaged, and have to be destroyed, it contributes nothing to the revenue. But the unlucky author of an unsaleable book pays the duty on paper in advance; and cannot claim its restitution even after his anticipations of fame, and fortune, are found to be wholly visionary; and his work, instead of finding its way into libraries, and drawingrooms, is packed off to the trunkmaker's, and butterman's!"

Many may think this a "good reason" for the repeal of this duty, though Mr. M'Culloch does not.

Among the duties of Excise, and Taxes, there are

several which are highly objectionable, as interfering with the progress of particular trades; or, as operating in diminishing the field for employment. The duty on post-horses, and on horses kept for private use, interferes injudiciously with the breeding of horses, and is besides an assessment inquisitorial and annoying in its character. The duty on carriages keeps back the trade of coach-making, and all the numerous arts which are connected with it. The tax on hackney carriages, and stage carriages, is an injudicious tax on the healthful enjoyment, and recreation, of the middle, and working classes. The various Excise duties on licences are, more or less, hindrances to trade; and are the more obnoxious from being extremely partial. There is no more reason why a man who sells tea, coffee, tobacco, or snuff, should pay a licence fee, than a man who sells bread, or meat, or vegetables. There is no more reason why the man who carries on his back, into remote parts of the country, supplies of goods for the mind, in the form of books, and tracts; or, for the body, in the form of wearing apparel, or ornaments for the person; should pay the hawker's, or pedlar's licence fee, than the bookseller, or other tradesman in the town, who sells the same articles. With more appearance of reason might the hawkers and pedlars be encouraged in their useful vocation.

It is not easy to see why bankers should be burdened with a licence duty of 30*l.* a year each, for liberty to pursue their calling, and merchants should go free. Nor why attorneys in London, and ten miles round, should pay for their certificate to practise, 9*l.* a year, or if beyond that distance, 6*l.* a year; nor why special pleaders and conveyancers in London, and ten miles round, should pay for their certificate to practise, 9*l.* a year, or elsewhere 6*l.* a year; and why barristers should go free; nor why a youth should be taxed with a stamp

of 80*l*. on his articles of clerkship to an attorney, and a pupil of a barrister should go untaxed; nor why auctioneers should be obliged to take out a yearly licence charged with a duty of 10*l*. for selling, by public auction, what might be sold by private contract without any duty; nor why pawnbrokers residing within London, or Westminster, or within, what is still called, the twopenny post range, should be charged with a yearly licence of 15*l*., or residing elsewhere, 7*l*. 10*s*.; nor why an appraiser should be charged with a yearly licence of 2*l*.; nor why a person going from town to town, or to other men's houses, carrying to sell, or exposing to sale, any goods, wares, or merchandise, should be charged yearly for a hawker's licence 4*l*.; and further, for every beast bearing, or drawing, burden with which he shall travel, 4*l*.; nor why vendors of medicines, within the limits of the twopenny post, or within the city of Edinburgh, should be charged with a yearly licence of 2*l*.; and in any other city or borough, or in any town corporate, or in the towns of Manchester, Birmingham, or Sheffield, with a yearly licence of 10*s*.; and in any other part of Great Britain, with a yearly licence of 5*s*.; nor why every driver of hackney carriages, or conductor, or driver, of metropolitan stage carriages, or waterman, should be charged with a yearly licence of 5*s*.; nor why every person who lets to hire any hackney carriage within five miles from the General Post Office, in the city of London, should be charged with a yearly licence of 1*l*.; and for and in respect of every such licence a weekly duty, for every day in the week, of 7*s*.; and for every day except Sunday, 6*s*.; nor why a licence, called special, to be married, should be taxed with a 5*l*. stamp; and a licence not special, to be married, should be taxed with a 10*s*. stamp; nor why marriage should be taxed at all; nor why a licence to hold a perpetual curacy, not proceeding upon a nomination, should be

taxed with a stamp of 3*l.* 10*s.* ; nor why a licence for the non-residence of a clergyman on his living, in England, should be taxed with a stamp of 1*l.* ; nor why any other ecclesiastical licence in England, or Scotland, should be taxed with a stamp duty of 2*l.* All these are strangely inconsistent anomalies, and being unequal, are unjust. But the injustice of many of these is accompanied with absurdity, as, for instance, in the case of auctioneers, when it is considered that some of the auctioneers, in towns, are making large incomes by their calling, while others, in remote parts of the country, are, perhaps, hardly making enough to pay the duty. The same remark applies to the business carried on by a first-rate banking house in the metropolis, and by a banker in a small country town. It is obviously quite impossible to assess such duties in any given proportion to the incomes of the contributors, and that, being fixed on only a few callings, without reference to the means, or ability, of the party to bear them, they are all of them manifestly partial and unjust.

With respect to the Stamp duties, and especially the Stamp duties on probates and successions, these are such remarkable instances of unjust and oppressive taxation that, the wonder is they have been suffered so long. With respect to the duty on successions, recently fixed on the whole landed property of the kingdom, this is one of the most marvellous instances of taxation ever permitted in this country, and it is quite impossible to suppose that the landowners could have been at all aware of the effect of this law when they allowed it to pass. It is the inevitable confiscation, in the course of time, of all the unentailed landed property of the country ; and, if this law should continue for half a century, the effect must be, that a great portion of the land in this country will have changed hands ; not by the law of nature, but by the law of succession duties.

The operation of this law is yet unknown, because unfelt; but, when in full operation, and with the quick successive operation which time, in many cases, will bring, the full effect will then be seen in the change of ownership of many of the oldest family estates in the kingdom; and if, by the conservative power of entails, many of the old family estates be still preserved in the old ancestral line, many of the possessors will find themselves with incomes so reduced, as to be quite unequal to their apparent position as lords of the soil, and quite inadequate to maintain what are now considered the necessary honours, and hospitalities, of the ancient house.

No law that ever passed was so fatal to the wealth, and power, of the landed aristocracy of Great Britain, as will be the law which imposed the Succession duty on landed estates. By a slow, but sure, process, this addition to the already heavy burdens on land, will work the downfall of a large portion of the present families which constitute the landed aristocracy of the kingdom. Estates will change hands, and time-honoured names will be obliterated from rent-rolls, and will be remembered no more. These will be absorbed by the great capitals accumulated in trade. The merchant princes will be the lords of the land, and the present landlords, or their generations, will become the labourers; until the same process has worked, in future generations, the same results. But, in the mean time, the sources of national prosperity will have been impaired. Land will have depreciated in value, and trade will have diminished in proportion. Trade must ever be, in a great measure, dependent, for its prosperity, on the prosperity of land, the basis of the nation's wealth. As land deteriorates in value, so must capital and trade diminish in quantity.

A flourishing state of trade, and a depressed state of agriculture, is a state of things which has never yet been

known, and which never can occur in this country. It may be taken as an axiom in political economy, that the interests of land and trade are identical, and inseparable—that taxation injurious to one, is injurious to both; and, therefore, that it is for the interest of both, that the burden of taxation should be borne equally. This desirable equilibrium has been more seriously disturbed by the recent impositions of the Succession duty upon land, than by any former Act of the Legislature, nor is it easy to retrace such a false step once taken. But by the plan here proposed, this law, so injurious to the landed interests, and every other law, so injurious to the trade interests of the country, would be at once, and for ever, swept away.

We are, as Mr. Tooke remarks, competitors in a race in which the smallest inequalities of pressure may give an advantage, or a victory, to rivals, who, with greater skill, or greater prudence, have provided for a more unfettered command of their natural aptitude for the contest. And, as he wisely adds, "No Free Trade financier will imperil the public credit by rash and weak experiments; but, while he regards caution as his first duty, he will also regard improvement as his first maxim."

In reviewing the taxation of this country, it is impossible to come to any other conclusion than, that it has grown up with the country, and has been imposed, from time to time, under pressing emergencies, without any system, and in defiance of all principles of justice, or policy; and that, for many of the taxes, no other justification can be attempted than the weak expediency of dire necessity, or the want of knowing how to do better. Governments must, indeed, have been at their wits' end when they resorted to such taxes as duties on paper, which are taxes on knowledge; and on patents, which are taxes on inventions, for the improvement and benefit

of mankind,—when they stooped to pick the pockets of pedlars and pawnbrokers, special pleaders and appraisers, auctioneers and attorneys, conveyancers and cab-drivers, bankers and bagmen, and a few others, out of the lot of helpless victims, of a few pounds a year, in the form of fees for licences to trade, and to practise their callings! And when they even condescended to lay a miserable tax on “Musical Instruments,” despite of Shakspeare’s recommendation in favour of “the concord of sweet sounds.” The wonder is that the persecuted Jew of former times, well known to be fully as rich now, and nearly as friendless, as in those days of racks and thumb-screws, has not been again resorted to, with some of the former flattering distinctions extended to that “peculiar people,” if not with all the former forcible means of persuasion. All that can be said of the old and modern practice is, that both are equally silly, but that, thumb-screwing Jews for their gold, was a little more cruel.

That these miserable, shift, contrivances should ever have been resorted to is strange; but that these, and many more like them, should be continued to this day of intellectual advancement is marvellous, and not a little discreditable to the present state of national intelligence.

But all these great and small impediments to progress may now be at once swept away, and the revenue of the State may be drawn directly from the few simple sources of all national wealth, open and intelligible to all the contributors, of all classes, and of the most ordinary understanding. Suppose the principle of free trade in full operation, in all branches of trade, and commerce, and what then would be the wealth of Great Britain, as the greatest, and undisputed, market of the world! What then might be, and ought to be, and would be, the prosperity of the people! It is for the People to answer this question. It is for the People alone to accomplish

this object for themselves; and for this, all that is needful is, "steadfastness within, and immoveable resolve,"—a united will, with united action. This has been the secret of success with all the mighty hunters of mankind, from Nimrod to Napoleon; and if often applied with success to the objects of personal ambition, it is surely, therefore, not the less applicable when the objects in view are the wealth of a nation, and the prosperity of a people.

To show the fallacy, that a nation can prosper by a wasteful expenditure of the public money, it is only necessary to look to the effects of the short war just concluded. Deluded by the temporary stimulus given to certain branches of manufacture by the feverish activity, and fictitious prosperity, infused over special departments of industry and trade, many political writers, and others, have run away with the idea, that the vast outlay occasioned by the war has, while it lasted, proved beneficial to the nation; that it has given employment to thousands who would otherwise have been unemployed, and large profits to hundreds who might, under other circumstances, have found no market for their skill and capital.

Whenever these hypotheses can be tested by the results of an experience applied, not to special classes, or narrow localities, but to the nation at large, the delusions which they suggest become lamentably obvious. Among these tests there is none more significant than that afforded by the comparative returns of pauperism. A parliamentary paper, issued last session, exhibits "the amount expended for the relief of the poor, together with the cost per head on the population, in the fifty principal towns of England and Wales, during the years 1854 and 1855." In the former year, the national expenditure was 60,000,000*l.*; in the latter, 84,500,000*l.* According to the theory of the political economists and others referred to, the general prosperity, as measured

by the activity of commerce and manufacture, and consequent increase in the employment and wages of industry, ought to have been considerably greater in 1855 than during the preceding year. But what are the results, as gathered from this return, where real consequences are presented with unflattering distinctness? In almost every case we find an increase — and in many the augmentation is serious — in the sums required for the relief of pauperism. This enhancement prevails, as a rule, throughout — in England, Wales, and Scotland — extending even to towns where the money laid out upon warlike paraphernalia by the Government might have been expected to, and did, flow most freely. To Liverpool, for example, which stands highest on the list in the scale of population, and where no small proportion of the public revenue was expended in freights and other supplies, the total amount spent upon poor relief increased, during the two years, from 84,000*l.* to 101,000*l.* The average amount of poor rate paid per head throughout the city was 6*s.* 6½*d.* in 1854, and 7*s.* 10½*d.* in 1855, showing an increase of more than 20 per cent. Matters were still worse in Manchester. The increase in that city has been from 51,000*l.* to 72,000*l.* in gross outlay, and from 5*s.* 6½*d.* to 7*s.* 9½*d.*, or 41 per cent. per head of population. The ascending scale then passes to Whitechapel, where the cost of relief enlarged from 20,000*l.* to 30,000*l.*, or 50 per cent.; the rate levied per head of population being 5*s.* 4½*d.* and 7*s.* 9½*d.* in the two years respectively. The list of increase is, however, headed by Bradford, in Yorkshire, where the outlay, in the respective years, increased from 13,800*l.* to 23,700*l.*; and the poor rate per head, from 2*s.* 8*d.* to 4*s.* 6½*d.*, or more than 78 per cent. Among the few instances of diminished poor rate, the best place is occupied by Merthyr, that centre of the Welsh iron manufacture, where the charge per head has

dropped $7\frac{1}{2}d.$ on the year. In Marylebone there has been a diminution to the amount of $2\frac{1}{2}d.$; in Sunderland, of $3\frac{1}{4}d.$; in Dudley, of $1d.$; in Shoreditch, of $\frac{3}{4}d.$; and in Dewsbury and Halifax, of exactly $\frac{1}{4}d.$ each.

Regarded in their actual amounts of charge, per head, the two lists present an equally disparaging contrast against the latest year. In 1854 the minimum rate anywhere levied for poor relief was $1s. 4d.$; in 1855 it was $1s. 6\frac{1}{4}d.$; Aston being the favoured locality in both cases. The maximum was in like manner increased, and in still larger proportion, being $8s. 7\frac{1}{2}d.$ in 1854, and $9s. 6\frac{1}{4}d.$ in 1855. Here, again, the lot fell upon the same city, Bristol. In the return for the last year, the five highest rates, after Bristol, are for Portsea, $8s. 10\frac{1}{4}d.$; Norwich, $8s. 7\frac{1}{2}d.$; Brighton, $8s. 6\frac{3}{4}d.$; Newington, $8s. 6d.$; and Liverpool, $7s. 10\frac{1}{2}d.$ per head of population. The five lowest, again, above the fortunate Aston, are Ashton-under-Lyne, where the charge per head is $1s. 11d.$; Dewsbury, $2s. 5\frac{1}{4}d.$; Halifax, $2s. 6d.$; Blackburn, $2s. 6\frac{1}{2}d.$; and Chorlton, $2s. 6\frac{1}{4}d.$ The poor rates in the metropolitan districts and suburbs were levied, during 1855, in Newington parish at $8s. 6d.$ per head; in Whitechapel at $7s. 9\frac{1}{2}d.$; in St. George's, Hanover Square, at $7s. 4\frac{3}{4}d.$; in St. Margaret's and St. John's, Westminster, at $7s. 1\frac{3}{4}d.$; in Mary-le-bone, $6s. 11\frac{1}{4}d.$; in Lambeth, $6s. 8d.$; in Greenwich, $6s. 5d.$; in Stepney, $5s. 11\frac{1}{4}d.$; in St. Pancras', $5s. 4\frac{1}{2}d.$; in Shoreditch, $5s. 1d.$; in Clerkenwell, $4s. 1\frac{1}{2}d.$; in Bethnal Green, $4s. 0\frac{1}{2}d.$; and in Islington, $3s. 9d.$ The aggregate number of inhabitants in the fifty "principal unions and parishes" comprised in this return, is 4,955,000, or not far short of one third the population of England and Wales. The average rate levied, per head, for relief of the poor throughout the entire list was $4s. 3\frac{1}{2}d.$ in 1854, and had increased to $4s. 11\frac{1}{2}d.$ in 1855. The whole sum paid in poor

rates by this section of the community in 1855, exceeded 1,230,000*l*.

The poor rate returns for the year ended 25th March, 1855, show that the sum of 5,890,041*l*. was expended for the relief of the poor in England and Wales during the year, being an increase of 607,188*l*. as compared with the sum expended during the preceding year.

As regards the expenditure, per head, of the population, the year 1855 was slightly above the average of the last twenty years; while, as regards the expenditure per pound of the annual value of rateable property, the excess above the average was considerably more.

The expenditure, per head, in 1855 was lower than it was in six, and higher than it was in fifteen, years of the series from 1834 to 1855; while the rate in the pound was lower than it was in two, and higher than it was in nineteen, years of the series.

The expenditure, per head, was 10½*d*. more in 1855, than in 1853, the lowest year of the series; and the expenditure, in the pound, in 1855 was 6½*d*. above that of 1837, the lowest year, and only 1½*d*. below that of 1834, the highest year. The expenditure, in the pound, in 1855, was only exceeded in the years 1834 and 1848; the one the year before the amendment of the poor law, the other including a portion of the year of the potatoe famine.

The foregoing statements are taken from the Report of the Poor Law Commissioners for England and Wales for the year 1855, their report for the year 1856 not being yet printed.

According to the Report of the Poor Law Commissioners for Scotland, for the year 1855-6, the sum expended for the relief and management of the poor in Scotland, during the year ended 14th May, 1856, including 3,337*l*. 2*s*. 10½*d*. expended on buildings, not being

authorised poor-houses, 21,510*l.* 15*s.* 9*d.* expended on authorised poor-house buildings, and 1,677*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* on general sanitary measures, was 629,348*l.* 11*s.* 2½*d.* In the preceding year, the expenditure for the same purpose was 611,784*l.* 17*s.* 3*d.*, showing an increase in the expenditure of 1855-6, over 1854-5, of 17,563*l.* 13*s.* 11½*d.*

The total annual value of lands and heritages in Scotland appears, by the returns of 1843, to have been 9,320,794*l.*, and by those of the year 1856, to have been 11,700,935*l.*; and the relief and management of the poor, including buildings of all kinds and general sanitary measures, being, as before stated, 629,348*l.* 11*s.* 2*d.* for the year ended 14th May, 1856, gives a rate per cent. of 6*l.* 15*s.* 0½*d.* on the annual value in 1843, and of 5*l.* 7*s.* 6½*d.* on the annual value in 1856.

According to the Report of the Poor Law Commissioners for Ireland, for the year 1855-6, the whole expenditure for the relief, and management, of the poor in Ireland during the year ended 29th September, 1856, was 685,259*l.*, showing a reduction of expenditure, on a comparison with the preceding year, of 74,893*l.* or, nearly 10 per cent. The whole amount of that expenditure in the year 1855-6, is, probably, about 2*s.* per head of the present population of Ireland.

In England and Wales the cost of relief appears to be about 5*s.* 6*d.*, and in Scotland about 4*s.* per head of the population. The average poundage of the Irish Poor Law expenditure on the valuation of Ireland is, at present, 1*s.* 2½*d.*

The sum expended in emigration by the Guardians of Unions in Ireland, during the past year, is only 6,859*l.*, and the number of persons assisted to emigrate is returned as 830. The extent, therefore, of emigration at the cost of the poor rates, is less by 6,005*l.* than in

any former years since the famine, the lowest previous amount having been 12,864*l.* in the year 1853.

But, to emigration in previous years, must be attributed the reduced expenditure, for the relief of the poor in Ireland, in the year 1855-6.

In reviewing the evidence here collected relative to the progress, and effects, of free trade, the following conclusions appear to be justified, viz. :—

1. That, every step towards the adoption of a Free Trade policy, by the abandonment of class monopolies, and of Customs and Excise duties, operating as obstacles and hindrances to the progress of industry and skill, has been immediately followed by large increase of revenue, and rise in the rate of profits, and wages, with corresponding increase in the employment, and comforts of all the working classes.

2. That, to the removal of these impediments to trade is to be attributed the great, and rapid, growth of the foreign trade, and the present flourishing condition of the agriculture of the country.

3. That, but for the relief thus afforded, the burden of taxation, aggravated by the evils of Customs and Excise duties, which diminished the real value of wages, by rendering a large class of imported articles, more or less necessities of daily life, scarce and dear; and still further aggravated by complicated and vexatious laws, which kept back industry, and capital, from profitable employment; must have reduced the trade and agriculture, and consequently, all classes of people in this country, to a state of unexampled depression, and misery.

4. That, in a country like Great Britain, of circumscribed area, with a manufacturing population, and large external trade, political liberty alone is not sufficient to preserve society from danger of retrogression; but that quite as vital to the general interests is a per-

fect freedom of trade and industry, and an equal adjustment of taxation.

5. That, all experience has proved that, by repealing all Customs and Excise duties, as here proposed, and so framing legislation as to make available the immense resources at command, and to bring within reach of the great body of the population, not only the necessaries of daily life, but also other articles of comparative luxury and comfort, by reducing these to the lowest market price, the revenue will be placed upon a more firm and safe basis; and the number and amount of the taxes may be greatly diminished.

6. That, all experience has proved that extension of markets, and a vast increase of demand, take place concurrently with a gradual diminution in the cost of imported commodities; with a range of prices so free from extreme and artificial fluctuations as to tend rapidly to a level, interrupted only by such variations as arise wholly from mercantile, or natural, causes.

7. That, the events which have taken place since 1845, justify the confident expectation that, the adoption of free trade, by foreign countries, is a simple question of time; the fact being, that every year which is suffered by foreign countries to elapse, before they adopt the same commercial level as Great Britain, will be so many years of a balance of trade in favour of this country.

8. That the principle is invariably true, and safe to be relied upon, that every reduction of duties, which admits a larger quantity of the produce of foreign countries, must, at least, be paid for by commodities which it is profitable to this country to export, whatever may be the degree of folly, or wisdom, displayed in the tariffs of the foreign countries to which they are sent. It is, therefore, certain that the country with low duties obtains the benefit of a larger trade; and it is

equally certain, that hostile high duties injure, chiefly, the revenue, and subjects, of the State which imposes them. It follows, as a necessary consequence, that the country which imposes no duties gains the benefit of a still larger trade.

Whatever remains to be added to this exposition, may properly come under the following

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

IN reviewing the foregoing facts and figures, the people will discriminate for themselves between those facts and figures, taken from official documents; and the deductions therefrom, which may be considered more or less speculative.

But if these deductions be fairly drawn from experience of the past, and be found to be in perfect accordance with generally received and acknowledged principles, then such deductions, though still speculative, being not yet proved, will be entitled to little less weight than the admitted facts and figures taken from official documents.

But, in this review, one conclusion will be certain, and that is, that the productive industry of this country is, under the present system of raising the revenue, taxed beyond all proportion to realised property or capital.

Now, this is the great question at issue, and is one which must soon be determined by the people:—Whether it be fair and reasonable, or proper and expedient, that property, which is created solely by the labour of the industrious classes, should be taxed in a

less degree than the labour by which that property is produced? This is one question which the people must determine for themselves; and is a question purely of principle, involving nothing which can properly be called *speculative*.

The other is also a question which the people must determine for themselves; and this is also a question of principle, and one on which, however clear to some, a difference of opinion may less unreasonably exist; and this is,—whether it be fair and reasonable, or proper and expedient, that the productive labour of the country should be subject to any tax at all, either *direct* or *indirect*? Whether property, or labour that produces property, be the fittest subject for taxation?

These are, in effect, the questions here submitted to the people for their dispassionate and intelligent consideration, and determination; for by them must these questions ultimately be determined. It is in vain to expect that such questions as these will ever be fairly, or on just principles, determined by the rulers. That it would be best for their own interests to settle these questions on the sound, and ever suitable, principles of justice, there is no doubt. But this supposes the existence of such a desire in the minds of the rulers, which all experience has proved does not very generally exist; and which few, perhaps, are sanguine enough to expect ever will prevail in the present dispensation of this world's affairs. But, still, the hope exists that such a desire may be created; and, whilst that hope remains, it encourages some few to proceed, as if such desire did now exist, and would ultimately prevail.

So long as men continue to form their opinions on their own narrow views of their own personal interests, and so long as property alone is allowed to exercise an overruling power in the Legislature of this country, so long will the interests of the many be made to give way

to, and be subservient to, the supposed interests of the few; and on the many, without any other property than their own industry and skill, will be imposed the greatest portion of the taxation of the country, by the holders of capital, who are enjoying their wealth in stately, and comfortable, indolence; and who, in general, assume to themselves superior merit on the very vague, and indefinite, ground of "Conservatism," or the preservation of the ancient British Constitution, with all its glorious privileges, in all its original purity, whenever that was, or whatever that means. But a Conservative, in the political sense of the word, has been described by a very learned writer, Dr. Newman, to mean a man who is at the top of the tree, and knows it, and means never to come down, whatever it may cost him to keep his place there; a man who upholds Government and society, and the existing state of things, not because it exists, not because it is good and desirable, because it is established, because it is a benefit to the population, because it is full of promise for the future; but, rather, because he himself is well off in consequence of it, and because to take care of number one is his main political principle.

It has ever been so, in all times, in all countries; and so it will continue to be, until the rising intelligence of the people enables them to assert their just rights, and, by lawfully united efforts, to exercise their inherent power, *by moral influence*, for enforcing them.

To invite the people, in the first instance, to inform themselves of their true position, and to avail themselves of their true power, is the object of "The People's Blue Book." They will here see that they are made to bear an undue proportion of the burdens of the State; that they are, as they always have been, grossly imposed upon by their rulers. That they are deprived, and that without the least necessity, of a fair

share of the fruits of their industry and skill, as the productive labourers of the country. That they are kept in ignorance of the true state of the affairs of the nation, which are most essentially their own affairs, for the purpose of continuing a system of injustice and oppression; and that this state of vassalage and dependence is quite inconsistent with the present state of intelligence amongst the people of this country.

They will here see a system so complicated, that the money accounts of the nation are quite unintelligible to the people, or to those by whom they are supposed to be represented; and that, consequently, the control which they are supposed to possess over the finances of the country is more imaginary than real. They will see that, under this system, they are taxed without knowing how, or to what amount, however much they may feel it in deprivation and suffering. That by far the greatest portion of the taxes levied are hidden from their view, in their food and clothing; and that thereby all the first and most important rules and maxims for levying taxes are utterly disregarded; and that, being levied on all the first necessities of life, the people have no choice but to bear them. That they are thus deprived of a fair share of the fruits of their labour, and of a reasonable share of many of those comforts and enjoyments of life (to say nothing of the luxuries) which were intended equally for all.

And they will see that all these, and, still worse, demoralisation and misery, are the consequences of this system, as vicious and cruel, as it is unnecessary. That it is like sowing the land with nettle seed, and leaving the labourers to reap the harvest.

Little good were done by showing all this, without, at the same time, showing the remedy. But here the remedy is shown, and shown to be as simple and easy in practice, as it is true and just to all in principle.

It proposes to make every person in the State, of the age of fourteen years, and upwards, contribute to the necessities of the State, in proportion to the benefits received from the State. It proposes to tax everybody equally for the protection of the person, on the assumption that life and limb are not to be estimated by property, but are of equal value to all; and equally for the protection of their property, assuming that to be property only which is realised, or accumulated in the form of capital; and it leaves everybody in full and free possession of the fruits of his daily labour, and skill, in the form of wages, or income; thus enlarging the sphere, and increasing the means, for productive industry, out of savings; and thus accumulating new capital for more extended enterprise.

By the proposed system of Free Trade, and Direct Taxation, the whole revenue of the kingdom would be raised under five heads, and the finance accounts of the nation might then be kept in a form as simple, and as clear, as any banker's accounts. The present frightful losses to the country from fraud, neglect, and wasteful expenditure, could then no longer be continued, at least, not without the knowledge and consent of the people who pay. The principal duty of the people, and their representatives, would then be to keep a careful watch over the public expenditure, and they would then, probably, find it best for their own interests to leave that duty to their representatives, and to confine their own attention to their own private affairs. And, how comparatively simple, and easy, would then be the duty of the people's representatives, when relieved from all financial questions with the State, with that one exception, of the State's expenditure. No more party discussions, then, about the estimates for the ensuing year; for the income of the State then would be nearly as fixed, and certain, as that of the private individual

who receives it half-yearly in dividends at the Bank of England. No more stormy debates in the House of Commons, nor agitating questions in the country, about new taxes to be imposed. The only question then would be—how much in the pound is to be put on, or taken off, the Property Tax? Then the people would see the effect of this new system of taxation; and, moreover, they would feel it, too, in the effects. They would see a much greater disinclination then, than now, to the imposition of new taxes, and they would see much greater watchfulness over the expenditure of public moneys. They would then not have to pay unknown sums yearly for printing Parliamentary Blue Books of 884 folio pages about the application of “public moneys,” which few, indeed, ever attempt to read, and fewer still are any wiser for attempting. Nothing would be more easy, then, than to raise a few additional millions, yearly, on any sudden emergency of the State, by an additional 6*d.* in the pound on the Property Tax; but few things, then, would be more difficult than to obtain the consent of the people to this addition.

There would be very little, then, for talking about; very little opportunity, then, for hiding deeds or intentions under words. The act, and the consequence, would then be too much like the bullet in its course to be mistaken; nor would attention be drawn off by the mere flash and report. But then the trigger could not be pulled without the consent of the people being first given; and if ever it were required to be pulled for the protection of this country against a common enemy, the people themselves would be the first to pull the trigger. Or, in the language of Liverpool, the people would be ready at all times to indorse the bill so drawn by the State, and would take good care to provide for the payment when due.

There is no ground for doubting, or distrusting, the intelligence, or patriotism, of the people of this country, and any suggestions to the contrary ought to be regarded only as the foolish, or insincere, declarations of those who would keep things as they are, for the sake of their own narrow, selfish, but mistaken views.

It is not with the motives of men that we can deal; but with their acts and words, we can, and ought. It is not for any one to pronounce an opinion on the motives of those who persist in advocating the continuance of the present system; but it is open to everyone to show that measures are unwise; and many will believe them to be unworthy. But the prejudices of mankind in general, from long habit, are much stronger, and produce a much greater degree of mental blindness than is generally imagined, or usually allowed for.

To follow in the footsteps of our ancestors is, with many, associated with a sort of religious feeling of duty; and any one who suggests that these are only leading us round in a circle, and thereby preventing any progress, is too often looked upon as an evil-disposed person, on whom some hard name is fixed, to designate him as belonging to a class to be avoided, as dangerous to good order and decorum in society. It is this self-wisdom of self-deceivers which has ever retarded the instinct of man's nature for progress and improvement; which sees innovation in change, and does not see that time is the greatest innovator.

Lord Bacon wisely wrote in his day:—"If time, of course, alters things for the worse, and wisdom and counsel shall not alter them to the better, what shall be the end? It is true, that what is settled by custom, though it be not good, yet at least it is fit; and those things which have long gone together are, as it were, confederate with themselves; whereas, new things piece not so well: but though they help by their utility, yet

they trouble by their unconformity; besides, they are like strangers, more admired, and less favoured. All this is true, if time stood still; which, contrariwise, moveth so round, that a forward retention of custom is as turbulent a thing as an innovation; and they that reverence too much old times, are but a scorn to the new. It were good, therefore, that men in their innovations would follow the example of time itself, which, indeed, innovateth greatly, but quietly, and by degrees scarce to be perceived."

The truth is, as observed by Archbishop Whately in his comments on this text of Lord Bacon, that in all the serious and important affairs of life, men are attached to what they have been used to, and this holds good in all departments of life. New medicines, for instance, come into vogue from time to time, with, or without, good reason; but a fundamentally new *system* of medicine, whether right or wrong, is sure to have the strongest prejudices enlisted against it. If, when the celebrated Harvey discovered the circulation of the blood, he had, on the ground that people often readily introduced some new medicine, calculated on a favourable reception, or even a fair hearing for his doctrine, which went to establish a fundamental revolution, he would soon have been undeceived by the vehement and general opposition with which he was encountered.

And it was the physicians of the highest standing that most opposed Harvey. It was the most experienced navigators that opposed Columbus's views. It was those most conversant with the management of the Post Office that were the last to approve of the uniform penny-postage.

For, the greater anyone's experience and skill in his own department, and the more he is entitled to the deference which is proverbially due to each man in his own province, the more likely, indeed, he will be to be

a good judge of improvements in details, or even to introduce them himself, but the more *unlikely* to give a fair hearing to any *radical* change. An experienced stage-coachman is likely to be a good judge of all that relates to turnpike-roads and coach-horses; but you should not consult him about railroads and steam-carriages. Again, everyone knows how slowly, and with what difficulty, farmers are prevailed on to adopt any new system of husbandry, even where the faults of an old established usage, and the advantage of a change, can be made evident to the senses.

An anecdote is told by Archbishop Whately of a gentleman, who, in riding through the deep and shady Devonshire lanes, became entangled in the intricacies of their numberless windings; and not being able to obtain a sufficiently wide view of the country to know whereabouts he was, trotted briskly on, in the confident hope that he should at length come to some house whose inhabitant would direct him, or to some more open spot, from which he could take a survey of the different roads, and observe whither they led. After proceeding a long time in this manner, he was surprised to find a perfect uniformity in the country through which he passed, and to meet with no human being, or come in sight of any habitation. He was, however, encouraged by observing as he advanced, the prints of horses' feet, which indicated that he was in no unfrequented track; these became, continually, more and more numerous, the further he went, so as to afford him a still increasing assurance of his being in the immediate neighbourhood of some great road, or populous village; and he accordingly paid less anxious attention to the bearings of the country, from being confident that he was in the right way. But still he saw neither house, nor human creature; and, at length, the recurrence of the same objects by the roadside opened his eyes to the fact, that all this time, misled

by the multitude of turnings, he had been riding in a circle; and that the footmarks, the sight of which had so cheered him, were *those of his own horse*; their number, of course, increasing with every circuit he took. Had he not fortunately made this discovery, perhaps he might have been riding there now.

The truth of the tale does not make it the less useful by way of apologue; and the moral we would deduce from it is, that in many parts of the conduct of life, and, not least, in government and legislation, men are liable to *follow the track of their own footsteps*—to set themselves an example—and to flatter themselves that they are going right, from their conformity to their own precedent.

It is commonly, and truly, said, when any *new and untried* measure is proposed, that we cannot fully estimate the inconveniences it may lead to in practice; but we are convinced this is even still more the case with any system which has *long been in operation*. The evils to which it may contribute, and the obstacles it may present to the attainment of any good, are partly overlooked, or lightly regarded, on account of their familiarity, partly attributed to such other causes as perhaps really do cooperate in producing the same effects, and ranked along with the unavoidable alloys of human happiness—the inconveniences from which no human policy can entirely exempt us. In some remote and unimproved districts, if you complain of the streets of a town being dirty and dark, as those of London were for many ages, the inhabitants tell you that the nights are cloudy, and the weather rainy; as for their streets, they are just *such as they have long been*; and the expedient of paving and lighting has occurred to nobody. The ancient Romans had, probably, no idea that a civilised community could exist without slaves. That the same work can be done much better and

cheaper by freemen, and that their odious system contained the seeds of the destruction of their empire, were truths which, familiarised as they were to the then existing state of society, they were not likely to suspect. "If you allow of no plundering," said an astonished Mahratta chief to some English officers, "how is it possible for you to maintain such fine armies as you bring into the field?" He and his ancestors, time out of mind, had, doubtless, been *following their own footsteps* in the established routine; and had accordingly never dreamed that pillage is inexpedient as a source of revenue, or even one that can possibly be dispensed with. *Recent* experiment, indeed, may bring to light, and often exaggerate, the defects of a new system; but *long familiarity* blinds us to those very defects.

The practical consequence of this attachment of men to what they have *long* been used to is, that it is a good point gained, when there does exist need for a change, to have brought about *some* change, even though little or nothing of improvement, because we may look forward with cheering hope to *a remedy of the remedy*—a removal of the newly introduced evils, as a change far more easily to be brought about, than the first change. Alterations in any building are easily made *while the mortar is wet*. So it is in legislation, and in all human affairs. While the most inconvenient and absurd laws are suffered to remain unchanged for successive generations, hardly an act is passed that any defects in it are not met by "acts to amend" it in the next and succeeding sessions.

To avoid the two opposite evils, noticed by Lord Bacon—the liability to sudden and violent changes, and the adherence to established usage when inconvenient or mischievous—to give the requisite stability to governments and other institutions, without shutting the door

against improvement — this is a problem which both ancient and modern legislators have not well succeeded in solving. Some, like the ancient Medes and Persians, and like Lycurgus, have attempted to prohibit all change; but those who constantly appeal to the wisdom of their ancestors, as a sufficient reason for perpetuating anything these have established, forget two things: first, that they cannot hope for ever to persuade all successive generations of men that there was once one generation of such infallible wisdom as to be entitled to control all their descendants for ever: which is to make the earth, in fact, the possession not of the living, but of the dead; and, secondly, that even supposing our ancestors gifted with such infallibility, many cases must arise in which it may be reasonably doubted whether they themselves would not have advocated, if living, changes called for by altered circumstances.

An antiquated form, however perverted from its original purpose, gratifies the lazy in their love of ease; it averts the mortification of confessing error, which is always so abhorrent to the self-satisfied stupidity of those who grow old without gaining experience.

It is to be observed, however, that in almost every department of life, the evil that has very long existed will often be less clearly perceived, and less complained of, than in proportion to the actual extent of the evil.

If you look to any department of government, or to any parish, or diocese, that has long been left to the management of apathetic, or inefficient persons, you will usually find that there are few or no complaints. Because complaints, which have long since been found vain, will have long since ceased to be made, there will be no great arrears of business undone, and of applications unanswered; because business will not have been brought before those who it is known will not transact it; nor applications made, to which no answer can be

hoped for; abuses, and defects, and evils of various kinds, which ought to have been remedied,—men will have learned to submit to, as to visitations of Providence; having been left without redress, till, at length, they have forgotten that any redress is due, or is possible. And this stagnation will come to be regarded as the natural state of things.

But it is far from being sufficient, as seems to be the notion of some persons, to show that the present is not the *fittest conceivable* occasion for taking a certain step.

Besides this, it is requisite to show,—not merely that a better occasion may be *imagined*,—or that a better occasion is *past*; but that a more suitable occasion is likely to arise *hereafter*: and *how soon*; and also, that the mischief which may be *going on during the interval* will be more than compensated by the superior suitability of that future occasion; in short, that it will have been worth waiting for. And, in addition to all this, it is requisite to show also the probability, that when this golden opportunity shall arise, men will be more *disposed to take advantage* of it, than they have heretofore appeared to be;—that they will not again fall into apathetic security, and fondness for indefinite procrastination.

This last point is as needful to be established as any; for it is remarkable that those who deprecate taking any step *just now*, in these times of extraordinary excitement, did not, on those former occasions, come forward to propose taking advantage of a comparatively calmer state of things. They neither made any call, nor responded to the call made by others.

And, indeed, all experience seems to show — comparing the apathy on the subject which was so general at those periods, with the altered state of feeling now existing — that a great and pressing emergency, and *nothing else*, will induce men to take any *decided* step;

and that a period of discussion and perplexing difficulty, is, though not *in itself*, the most suitable occasion for such a step, yet — constituted as human nature is — the best, because the *only* occasion on which one can hope that it will be taken.

Still, however, we must expect to be told by many, that, sooner or later, matters will come right, spontaneously, if left untouched; that, *in time*, though we cannot tell how soon, a period of extraordinary excitement is sure to be succeeded by one of comparative calm. In the meantime, it is forgotten at *what cost* such spontaneous restoration of tranquillity is usually purchased — how much the fire will have consumed before it shall have burnt out of itself. The case is very similar to what takes place in the natural body; the anguish of acute inflammation, when left to itself, is succeeded by the calm of a mortification; a limb is amputated, or drops off; and the body, but no longer the whole body, is restored to a temporary ease, at the expense of a mutilation.

It is true, that whatever is established, and already existing, has a presumption on its side; that is, the burden of proof lies on those who propose a change. No one is called on to bring reasons *against* any alterations, till some reasons have been offered *for* it. But the deference which is thus claimed for old laws and institutions is sometimes extended to what are called “the good old times;” as if the world had formerly been older, instead of younger, than it is now. But it is manifest, that the advantage proposed by old *men*, that of long experience, must belong to the present age, more than to any preceding.

Is there not then, some reason for the ridicule which Lord Bacon speaks of, as attaching to those “who too much reverence old times?” To say that no changes shall take place, is to talk idly. We might as well pre-

tend to control the motions of the earth. To resolve that none shall take place *except* what are undesigned, and accidental, is to resolve that though a clock may gain, or lose indefinitely, at least we will take care that it shall never be regulated. "If time" (to use again Bacon's warning words) "alters things to the worse, and wisdom and counsel shall not alter them to the better, what shall be the end?"

It is to be observed that, hurtful changes are often attributed to harmless ones; and apprehensions are entertained that a *change*, however small, is necessarily a dangerous thing, as tending to *produce* extensive and hurtful innovations. Many instances may be found of small alterations being *followed* by great and mischievous ones; but it is doubtful whether all history can furnish an instance of the greater innovation having been, properly speaking, *caused* by the lesser. Of course, the first change will always *precede* the second, and many mischievous innovations *have* taken place; but these may often be explained by the too long postponement of the requisite changes; by the neglect of the homely old proverb, "*A tile in time saves nine.*" A house may stand for ages if some very small repairs and alterations are promptly made from time to time, as they are needed; whereas, if decay be suffered to go on unheeded, it may become necessary to pull down, and rebuild, the whole house. The longer any needful reform is delayed, the greater, and the more difficult, and the more sudden, and the more dangerous, and unsettling, it will be. And then, perhaps, those who had caused this delay, by their pertinacious resistance to any change at all, will point to these evils — evils brought on by themselves — in justification of their conduct. If they would have allowed a few broken slates on the roof to be at once replaced by new ones, the timbers would not have rotted, nor the walls, in

consequence, leaned; nor would the house have then needed to be demolished and rebuilt.

Most wise, therefore, is the admonition of Lord Bacon, to copy the great innovator time, by vigilantly watching for, and promptly counteracting, the first small insidious approaches of decay, and introducing gradually, from time to time, such small improvements (individually small, but collectively great) as there may be room for, and which will prevent the necessity of violent and sweeping reformatations.

As that excellent, learned, and far-sighted man, Dr. Arnold, said, "There is nothing so revolutionary, because there is nothing so unnatural, and so convulsive to society, as the strain to keep things fixed, when all the world is, by the very law of its creation, in eternal progress; and the cause of all the evils of the world may be traced to that natural, but most deadly, error of human indolence and corruption, that our business is to preserve, and not to improve. It is the ruin of us all alike, individuals, schools; and nations. . . . One would think that people who talk against change were literally, as well as metaphorically, blind, and did not see that everything in themselves, and around them, is changing every hour, by the necessary laws of its being.

There are some remarks of an admirable writer of the present day, Sir Francis B. Head, in one of his "Descriptive Essays," so applicable to this subject, that the following is given in his own impressive words:—

"There is, we humbly think, something impressively appalling in the reflection that everything in creation has been immutably fixed, by a strict entail, save and except the march, progressive, or retrograde, of human reason.

"The velocity of lightning, the sound of thunder, the power of the wind, which still goeth where it

listeth, do not increase. The heat of the sun, the blueness of the sky, the freshness of the mountain air, the solemn grandeur of the trackless ocean, remain unaltered. The nest of the bird improves no more than its plumage,—the habitation of the beaver no more than its fur,—the industry of the bee no more than its honey; and lovely as is the melody of the English lark, yet the unchanged accents of its morning hymn daily proclaim to us, from the firmament of heaven, that, in the conjugation of the works of Nature, there are no distinctions of tenses, for, that, what is, what was, and what will be, are the same.

“But it is not so with human reason. Man alone has the power to amass, and bequeath to his posterity, whatever knowledge he acquires, and thus our condition on earth may be improved *ad infinitum* by the labour, intelligence, and discoveries of those who have preceded us.”

Nature, therefore, points out to us by this exception, that man is intended for change, and for improvement by change.

It is a common answer to any proposed change for the moral, or physical, improvement of the condition of a people, that they are not yet sufficiently prepared for it; as if any preparation were required for improving the spiritual, or temporal, welfare of a people.

If there be any one truth which the deductions of reason alone, independently of history, would lead us to anticipate, and which, again, history alone would establish, independently of antecedent reasoning, it is this: that a whole class of men, placed permanently under the ascendancy of another as subjects, without the rights, and privileges, of citizens, must be a source, at the best, of weakness, and generally of danger, to the state. They cannot well be expected, and have rarely been found, to evince much hearty patriotic feeling

towards a community in which their neighbours look down on them as an inferior, and permanently degraded, species. While kept in brutish ignorance, poverty, and weakness, they are likely to feel — like the ass in the fable — indifferent whose pannier they bear. If they increase in power, wealth, and mental development, they are likely to be ever on the watch for an opportunity of shaking off a degrading yoke. Even a complete general despotism, weighing down all classes without exception, is, in general, far more readily borne than invidious distinctions, drawn between a favoured, and a depressed, race of subjects; for men feel an *insult* more than a *mischief* done to them, and feel no insult so much as one daily, and hourly, inflicted by their immediate neighbours.

But, besides the other causes which have always operated to perpetuate, in spite of experience, an unjust and impolitic system, the difficulty of *changing* it, when once established, is one of the greatest. The false step is one which it is peculiarly difficult to retrace. Men long debarred from civil rights, almost always become ill fitted to enjoy them. The brutalising effects of oppression, which cannot immediately be done away by its removal, at once furnish a pretext for justifying it, and make relief hazardous. Kind and liberal treatment, if cautiously and judiciously bestowed, will *gradually* and slowly advance men towards the condition of being worthy of such treatment; but treat men as aliens, or enemies, as slaves, as children, or as brutes, and they will *speedily*, and *completely*, justify your conduct.

The indiscriminating advocates of delay, who are always saying that “The People are not yet *ripe* for such a change,” usually forget to inquire, “Are they ripening? When, and how, are they likely to become ripe?” or, “Are men’s minds to ripen like winter pears, merely by laying them by, and letting them alone?”

"Time," as Bishop Copleston has remarked, "is no agent." When we speak of such and such changes being brought about *by* time, we mean *in* time,—by the gradual and imperceptible operation of some gentle agency. We should observe, therefore, whether there be any such agency at work, and in what direction;—whether to render a certain change more difficult, or easier. If you be surrounded by the waters, and want to escape, you should observe whether the tide be flowing or ebbing. In the one case, you should at once attempt the ford, at all hazards; in the other you have to wait patiently. And if the waters be still, and neither rising nor falling, then you should consider that though there be no danger of drowning, you must remain insulated for ever, unless you cross the ford; and that, if this be to be done at all, it may be as well done at once.

The case of slavery in the United States is one of a rising tide. The rapid multiplication of slaves, which has already rendered their emancipation a difficult and hazardous step, makes it more so every year, and increases the danger of a servile war, such as that of St. Domingo.

The serfdom of the Russians, is, perhaps, rather a case of still water. There seems no great reason to expect that the state of things will grow either worse, or better, spontaneously.

In each of these cases, the slaves, and the serfs, are not ripe for freedom; no *enslaved people ever are*; and to wait, before you bestow liberty, or political rights, till the recipients are fit to employ them aright, is to resolve not to go into the water, till you can swim. You *must* make up your mind to encounter many very considerable evils, at first, and for some time, while men are learning to use the advantages conferred on them.

The truth is, in all these cases, in the selfish wisdom of

persons entrusted with power, sacrificing the interests of others, to their own. But, probably, the greatest amount of evils of this class—that is, the sacrifice of public good, to individual profit—has arisen from the favour claimed by, and shown to, certain classes of men, in no official situation, who have persuaded the nation (and, doubtless, sometimes themselves also) that their own interest was that of the State. Both the Spaniards, and the English, prohibited their colonies from trading with any but the mother country, and also from manufacturing for themselves; though the colonists were fellow-citizens, and were virtually taxed for the profit, not of the State, but of certain manufacturers and merchants. For, if they had found the goods produced in the mother country, to be cheaper and better than they could make them for themselves, or buy elsewhere, they would have supplied themselves with these of *their own accord*, without need of prohibitory laws; but whenever this was not the case—that is, whenever there was *any occasion* for such a law—it is plain they were paying an *extra* price, or buying inferior articles for the profit of the manufacturers at home. Yet this never seemed to strike even the Americans themselves, or their advocates, at the time when the revolt broke out. It was only avowed taxation, for the benefit of the *government* at home (which *had* laid out something for them), that they complained of.

And this did not arise from comparative indifference to the welfare of our colonial fellow-subjects; for the like sort of policy has been long pursued at home. We imported timber of inferior quality from Canada, when better was to be had at a tenth part of the distance, lest saw-mills in Canada, and timber-ships, engaged in that trade, should suffer a diminution of profit; though the total value of them all put together did not, probably, equal the *annual* loss sustained by the public. And we

prohibited the refining of sugar, in the sugar colonies, and chose to import it in the most bulky, and most perishable, form for the benefit of a few English sugar-bakers, whose total profits did not, probably, amount to as many shillings as the nation lost pounds.

And the land-owners maintained, till very lately, a monopoly against the bread-consumers, which amounted, virtually, to a tax on every loaf, for the sake of keeping up rents. Other selfishness may be as intense, but none is so unblushing, because none so much tolerated, as that of a monopolist claiming a *vested interest* in a public injury.

But, doubtless, many of these claimants persuaded *themselves*, as well as the nation, that they were promoting the *public* good.

All these evils have been got rid of only by change. But most men have no desire for change, *as* change, in what concerns the serious business of life. True it is, that great, and sudden, and violent, changes do take place,—that ancient institutions have been recklessly overthrown—that sanguinary revolutions have taken place in quick succession, and that new schemes, often the most wild and extravagant, both in civil and religious matters, have been again, and again, introduced. We need not seek far to find countries that have had, within the memory of persons now living, not less than nine or ten perfectly distinct systems of government. But no changes of this kind ever originate in the mere love of change, for its own sake. Never do men adopt a new form of government, or a new system of religion, merely from that delight in variety which leads them to seek new amusements, or to alter the fashion of their dress. They seek changes in what relates to serious matters of fundamental importance, only through the pressure of severe suffering, or of some vehement want, or, at least, from the perception of some great evil or

deficiency. Widely as the vulgar are often mistaken as to the *causes* of any distress, or as to the *remedies* to be sought, the distress itself is real when they aim at any great revolution. If an infant beat its nurse, although its acts be as irrational as those of a mad dog, you may be assured that it is really in pain. And when men are willing to work, but starving for want of it, though it be absurd for them to seek to obtain relief, by establishing a new kind of senate, or parliament, or by setting up a dictator, or by slaughtering all people of property, still the evil itself is real, and is keenly felt; and it is *that*, and not a mere love of change, for change sake, that drives them to take the most irrational steps.

And when evils are really occasioned by absurd and oppressive laws, it is right and rational to aim at a change, though the changes which an infuriated populace does bring about, will usually be both irrational and wrong—will overthrow the good, along with the evil—and will be pregnant with worse evils than they seek to remedy.

The ancient despotism of France, detestable as it was, did not cause more misery in a century, than the Reign of Terror did in a year. And, universally, the longer, and the more grievously, any people have been oppressed, the more violent, and extravagant, will be the reaction.

Hence, though it be true, that innovations in important matters are never sought through mere love of change, for its own sake, but for relief from some evil, the danger is not the less of rash and ill-advised innovations; because evils, greater or less, and more or less of imperfection, always do exist in all human institutions administered by fallible men.

But it should be remembered that, though pure conservatism is a folly, and though it be true, that men do not covet innovation, as such, with equal blindness, still

there is as much folly, and as much danger, in a blindly reformatory principle. For, though men do not seek a change, except when they perceive some evil, inconvenience, or imperfection, the thorough-going reformer always *will* find some—not unreal—ground of complaint in the working of every institution. If the house is to be pulled down, and rebuilt, till we have got one that is perfect, and, moreover, that every one will think such, we shall be as constantly in brick and mortar as if we did delight in pulling down for its own sake.

And we should remember, also, that custom will often blind one to the good, as well as to the evil, effects of any long-established system. The *preventive* effects, indeed, whether good, or evil, of any long-established system are hardly ever duly appreciated. But though no law, or system, whether actually existing, or proposed, can be expected to be unexceptionable; or should have its defects pointed out without any notice of corresponding advantages; it is most important to *examine* every measure, whether new or old, and to try it on its intrinsic merits, always guarding against the tendency to acquiesce without inquiry in the necessity of any existing practice. In short, we should, on the one hand, not venture rashly on untrodden paths, without a careful survey of the country; and, on the other hand, be on our guard against following, in confident security, *the track of our own footsteps*.

Lord Bacon's maxim, therefore, is most wise, to "make a stand upon the *ancient* way, and look about us to discover what is the *best* way;" or, in the language of Scripture, from which this is taken, "*Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein;*" neither changing at once anything that is established, merely because of some evils actually existing, without considering whether we can substitute something that is on the whole better;

nor, again, steadily rejecting every plan, or system, that can be proposed, till one can be found that is open to no objections at all. For nothing framed, or devised, by the wit of man ever was, or can be, perfect; and, therefore, to condemn and reject everything that is imperfect, and has some evils attending on it, is a folly which may lead equally — and, indeed, often has led — to each of two opposite absurdities; either an obstinate adherence to what is established, however bad, because nothing absolutely unexceptionable can be substituted; or, again, a perpetual succession of revolutions till we can establish — which is totally impossible — some system completely faultless, or so framed as to *keep* itself in good order. To conceive such a system, whether actually existing, or ideal, is to be beset by the same chimerical hope in human affairs, that has misled so many speculators in mechanics, — the vain expectation of attaining the *perpetual motion*.

Many of the foregoing are the admirable remarks of Archbishop Whately on the wise text of that great philosopher, Lord Bacon, and to such teachers as these, who combine the wisdom of past ages, with the learning, and experience, of the present age, the people of these days may well look for instruction, and safely follow in the way to which they point.

And, now, to apply the wisdom of one of the greatest philosophers of past ages, and the wise views of one of the most exact reasoners, one of the most religious minds, and one of the most learned, and practically safe, teachers, of the present age, to the great question of the people's welfare now under consideration; — how to effect such a change in a long-established usage, as shall secure to them an improved state and condition, without pulling down, and overthrowing, or endangering, the foundation of that structure which has been so long building, and which, though not yet completed,

and far from perfect, has so long stood and flourished ; — in short, how to afford to the productive labourers of this country some greater, and fairer, share in the fruits of their labour, than they have hitherto enjoyed.

Here is a change proposed for this object only, with no pulling down, but only new ordering and arranging the present machinery, to make it work more easily, and last the longer, — to relieve the present friction, and take off the unequal pressure from those parts which set the whole in motion, and keep it going ; — to raise the steam power, by providing more, and better fuel.

What is this proposal, but to feed the people better, and more cheaply, and to bring more easily within their reach, more of the comforts, and enjoyments, of life ? To increase the steam, by making the fire burn brighter ? And, in the change proposed for this object, where is the innovation ?

In what respect would the proposed Property Tax differ from the Land Tax Act, passed in the fourth year of the reign of William and Mary (1692), upwards of 150 years ago, *confirmed* and *made perpetual* by the Act 38 Geo. III. c. 60, subject to redemption ; and by several subsequent Acts, in the same reign, again and again recognised, and confirmed ?

The Act of William and Mary directed an assessment of 4*s.* in the pound upon all real estate assessed on the *bond fide* rack-rent, and on offices (except naval and military) ; and on personal estate 24*s.* per 100*l.*, or 4*s.* in the pound on 6*l.*, the then legal rate of interest ; stock on land, and household property, being exempt.

Why that equal and just law has not since been carried out in its true spirit, it is needless now to inquire. But, carrying out this law now, 150 years and more after it was made, and adapting it, in its spirit, and intention, to the present times, can be no innovation.

A full and fair valuation was directed to be made, of all the property of the kingdom, and the King's Remembrancer in the Exchequer was required by the Act (s. 9.) to ingross in a book, made of parchment, the several sums returned to him, as assessed upon every county, riding, city and town, and place therein, which returns the Commissioners, appointed for putting the Act into execution, were therein directed to make.

It is proposed that similar directions should now be given, and like arrangements made, and for the same purpose, namely, an assessment of 4s. in the pound upon all real estate assessed on the *bonâ fide* rack-rent; and, on personal estate, at the same rate as already explained.

To obtain such a valuation of the real estate of the kingdom, would be neither difficult, nor expensive, nor would much time be required, with the ordnance surveys, and the surveys and valuations for the tithe commutation, already made. It will, therefore, be for those who object, to state the grounds of their objection to this part of the proposed scheme for a system of *equal* and *direct* taxation.

The more carefully it is examined in all its details, the more clearly it will be seen, that it is founded on the just and sound principle, of making every person contribute to the necessities of the State in proportion to his means; and that, in its operation, the effect will be, to impose no undue portion of the burden to be borne on any particular description of property, or class of persons; but to spread the whole equally over all, in a manner most conducive to the best interests of all, by leaving free from all imposts, bonds, and shackles of every sort, the labour and skill, the trade and commerce, and the manufactures of the country, and the people themselves, to increase and multiply, according to the original design of creation, to replenish the earth

and subdue it ; and at the same time to enjoy the fruits thereof, which shall then be to them for meat.

Whoever says that this is innovation and injustice, must prove it to be so, by something more than mere assertion ; and if the people would have it carried out, they must demand it, through their representatives, in a proper manner, in the proper place ; and they must persist in so demanding, until their just demand be granted.

It is scarcely possible, and, if possible, would be hardly useful, to anticipate, for the purpose of answering, all the objections which may be advanced against the proposed change. That great numbers of persons who now draw their means of subsistence from the public moneys, would then no longer be able to do so, it is to be hoped, is true. This class of objectors will, probably, not be any great difficulty in the settlement of this question, between the State and the people ; being entitled to no more consideration, as affecting the merits of the question itself, than were the stage-coachmen and postillions put out of employment by the introduction of railways ; and, like these, so, probably, will they soon find employment more profitable to themselves and others.

But there is one objection which deserves a little more attention, considering the high quarters whence it comes. This objection was advanced, in a late debate in the House of Commons, by the leaders of all parties, and will be best given in their own words.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, in explanation of his unfortunate reference to old Arthur Young's Agricultural Tour of the last century, as an authority for the Legislature of this country in the middle of the present century : " What that dictum condemned was, the attempt to raise revenue from one great article of taxation, such as some great, and all absorbing, tax upon

property; for example, the system, which obtains in Oriental countries, of providing for very nearly all the expenses of government by a land tax."

This was responded to by Mr. Gladstone as follows:—"The comparative merits of *direct*, and *indirect* taxation may be a subject for intellectual exercitation; but I entirely agree with my Right Honourable Friend, that *indirect* taxation is deeply, and inextricably, rooted in our financial system, and that it is neither practicable, nor possible, to get rid of it."

And this was confirmed by Mr. Disraeli, as the leader of the Opposition party, as follows:—"I think the Right Honourable Gentleman stated very accurately that, the *direct* taxes had produced 21,000,000*l.*, and the *indirect* taxes something more than 39,000,000*l.*; but he omitted one item of no mean importance, and that was the whole local taxation of the country. . . . We have no wish to disturb in any way the balance which exists between *direct*, and *indirect* taxation."

And next came Mr. T. Baring, with a short *quietus* to all such visionary schemes, on the simple authority of his own self-satisfactory dictum. He said, he was "satisfied that 60,000,000*l.* could not be levied solely by *direct* taxation; and, even if it could, the effect would be injurious, inasmuch as it would tend to send available capital from the country."

Now, these, as the opinions of persons holding high and responsible positions in the country, will carry a certain weight, and are entitled to consideration, especially that of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose opinion, on any subject on which he thinks himself qualified to give it, quite independently of his position, may be expected always to carry weight with reflecting minds. But, on the present question, what is the value of the objection on the ground stated by him,

namely, that it is a system borrowed from Oriental countries ?

If it be so, are not nearly all our usages of Oriental origin ? Is not our system of tithes, the most ancient of all, of Oriental origin ? Is not the institution of an hereditary monarchy the same ? Is not the Bible itself, on which we purport to found all our institutions, the same ?

If Oriental countries furnish us with instances of despotic governments, do they not also furnish us with, at least, as many instances of the highest wisdom for the conduct of human affairs ? If this be so, as, surely, must be admitted, then the prejudice intended by this reference to Oriental countries, is groundless, and nothing is gained. The question must stand, or fall, on some other ground than this.

And next, Mr. Gladstone, whose delight, and success, in "intellectual exercitation" seems to be generally acknowledged ; — what does he say ? — but that, in his opinion, "indirect taxation is so deeply and inextricably rooted in our financial system, that it is neither practicable, nor possible, to get rid of it."

Certainly, if not possible, it is not practicable. But, if possible, it may be practicable. Now, here are two questions, and if the first be decided with Mr. Gladstone, it is unnecessary to consider the second. But here both these questions have been treated of, and the possible, and the practicable, have both been shown, and proved, as far as facts and figures can prove what has never been tried.

Mr. Disraeli "has no wish to disturb the balance which exists between direct and indirect taxation." This assumes that there is a balance already ; but many think quite the contrary, and that one scale kicks the beam. Which of these two opinions is nearest right, the facts and figures here given will show.

Mr. T. Baring is satisfied that the required sum "could not be levied solely by direct taxation, and that, if it could, it would tend to send available capital from the country."

Would it—why? Mr. T. Baring has given no reasons why. But here are the reasons why such would not be the tendency; and that the tendency is quite the other way.

Capital, as is well known, invariably goes where it finds the most profitable employment; and, in the fact that it is the most abundant in this country, is the evidence that it is more profitably employed in this than in any other country. By far the greatest part of the moveable capital of this country is embarked in trade and commerce, and manufactures. Now, it is almost needless to say that, the releasing trade and commerce, and manufactures, from all taxes, cannot render these employments less profitable investments for capital.

What description of property, then, would be sent out of the country? The land we have got must remain with us. No other description of property than that which would come under one of these two heads is proposed to be touched. Money would not go as long as it could be more profitably employed here than elsewhere. Land could not go. But, if it be said that land, being so heavily taxed, would go down in value, that will be a fair subject for inquiry.

It has been already shown, that land is less heavily taxed than any other description of property in this country. It has also been shown, in the account between land, and all other property, that the amount of taxes proposed to be taken off, is much greater than the amount proposed to be put on, land.

It is a well-known fact, that the average price of land in this country is very much higher than in any other country in the world. It is, therefore, plain that land

is more valuable in this country than in any other. That arises, no doubt, from many causes, and one of these is in the fact of the limited supply. That must always remain much the same. Another cause is in the supposed security of the owner's enjoyment. That has not been diminished by the experiments hitherto tried in Free Trade and Direct Taxation; and, therefore, the extension of this system, as proposed, can furnish no ground for apprehension that the tendency would be to diminish such security. On the contrary, have not the effects of these experiments been to increase rents and the value of land? And is it not reasonable to expect that, if these were carefully carried further, the same effects would follow, in a still further increase of rents, and the value of land?

But, is the increased prosperity of the country in general, and the increased comforts and enjoyments of the people in particular, nothing in this question? Is not the security of all property thereby increased, as well as the property itself increased? There is no country in the world where property is so secure as in this; no country where property is so highly valued, and is so valuable, as in this; no country where property purchases so many comforts, and enjoyments, as in this; no country which possesses such vast resources, such means of wealth, prosperity, and greatness, or which is so lightly taxed in proportion to its resources, as this.

Few, as Coleridge has truly said, are sufficiently aware how much reason most of us have, even as common moral livers, to thank God for being Englishmen.

It would furnish grounds both for humility towards Providence, and for increased attachment to our country, if each individual could but see and feel, how large a part of his innocence he owes to his birth, breeding,

and residence in Great Britain. The administration of the laws, the almost continual preaching of moral prudence; the pressure of our ranks on each other, with the consequent reserve and watchfulness of demeanour in the separate ranks, and the emulation in the subordinate; the vast depth, expansion, and systematic movements of our trade; and the consequent interdependence, the arterial, or nerve-like, network of property, which make every deviation from outward integrity, a calculable loss to the offending individual himself from its mere effects, as obstruction and irregularity; and, lastly, the naturalness of doing as others do; these, and the like influences peculiar, some in the kind, and all in the degree, to this privileged island, are the buttresses on which our foundationless well-doing is upholden, even as a house of cards, the architecture of our infancy, in which each is supported by all.

And, as he adds, Well then may we pray, "*Give us peace in our time, O Lord!*" Well for us if no revolution, or other general visitation, betray the true state of our national morality! Well will it be for as many of us as have duly reflected on the prophet's assurance, "*That we must take root downwards, if we would bear fruit upwards.*" If we have obtained a good name, so that the nations around us have displayed a disposition to follow our example, and imitate our institutions, well will it be for all, and far more glorious, and to our neighbours, incomparably more instructive, if in distresses, to which all countries are liable, we bestir ourselves in remedial and preventive arrangements, which all nations may, more or less, adopt; inasmuch as they are grounded on principles intelligible to all rational, and obligatory on all moral beings; inasmuch, as having been taught by God's word, exemplified by God's providence, commanded by God's law, and recommended by God's grace, they can form the foundations of a Christian community.

With all its faults, with all its national evils, in no country in the world are goodness and wisdom so much appreciated, so much practised, as in this. In no country in the world are civil and religious liberty, and all the rights and privileges of person and property, so much respected, as in this. In no country in the world are the means and prospects of future prosperity so great, as in this.

For these, and many other reasons which might be enumerated, there would be no such tendency as apprehended, to send available capital from the country. But it is time enough to answer such objections as these, when reasons for the objections are given. In the mean time, for the satisfaction of those who consider Sir Robert Peel an authority on this question, the following is the opinion expressed by him, in his speech in the House of Commons, on the proposed Income Tax, 23rd March, 1842.

“Another objection to a tax on incomes is, that it has a great tendency to drive people from England. Why has not the present system of taxation a tendency to drive people out of the country, quite as great as the income tax? What is there at present to prevent the great landed proprietors of this country from living abroad, and from escaping thereby the effects of both direct and indirect taxation? But what I propose is, that those classes should be subjected to a direct contribution to the revenue, and from that contribution, I apprehend, they cannot possibly escape. At least then, my scheme has this advantage, that I call on him, who chooses, either for his amusement or pleasure, to travel abroad, and evade taxation at home, to contribute his fair proportion towards the revenue of this country. But I do even more,—I offer an inducement to the absentees to return. I propose, by the amended tariff, to reduce the cost of living in this country, which has

hitherto, with a certain class at least, been the reason for residence abroad. I expect that, the result of the new tariff will be, to reduce the cost of articles of consumption in this country,—and, let me ask, will not this have a tendency to induce absentees to return? I say it will! If, by removing prohibitory duties, and reducing the scale of duties generally, I reduce the cost of living, I contend that, instead of driving capital out of the country, the general tendency of my measure will be, to induce absentees to return, and to insure their remaining when once they come back."

If such were the effect of Sir Robert Peel's new tariff,—and who can doubt it?—how much more visible must be that result, when all duties are at once swept away?—how much greater must be the reduction in the cost of living in this country when all duties are removed from all articles of food and raiment?—how much stronger must be the tendency, not only to induce absentees to return to this country, but to prevent all that class of persons from seeking a residence abroad?

And now respecting the property to be taxed under the proposed property tax. The Act 4th William and Mary has been very closely followed, with the exception only of mines, minerals, mills, furnaces, iron, and other works and manufactories, canals, railways, turnpike and other roads, churches and other buildings dedicated to public worship; all which are omitted, and proposed to be free from any tax. For these exceptions some further explanation may be required.

With respect to churches, and other places of public worship, no explanation can be required for this distinction.

With respect to all the other excepted property, the reasons will be apparent on a little reflection. All these are like raw materials, or workmen's tools; of no intrinsic value but as the means of wealth under the

application of capital and labour. It is, therefore, considered that to tax the sources of wealth, in that state, is to impair them; and thereby to defeat one of the objects mostly to be regarded in all taxation.

Another, and by no means unimportant consideration, is the practical difficulty in imposing a tax on such description of property, and the great vexation and frequent injustice which must attend the levying of such a tax.

To tax mines and minerals, which are lying unworked in the earth, supposes an estimate first made of the value; and that, with any pretension to accuracy, is impossible. If under work, then the estimate of value, if not impossible, must always be very uncertain.

If the actual value of the workings be taken (which can be obtained only by a most obnoxious inquisition), then it is gross injustice to levy the tax on profits, without first giving credit for all capital advanced, and making full allowances for all wear and tear of machinery, and current expenses, all bad debts, and other losses, and risks of trade. All this is, practically, impossible; and, if possible, is, in principle, wrong; and, in practice, injurious: the manifest tendency being, to discourage the investment of capital, and the employment of labour, in such pursuits.

The same reasons apply to taxing mills, furnaces, iron, and other works and manufactories. All these are but the means of wealth under the application of capital and labour; and to tax these is to tax the workmen's tools; and thereby to discourage the investment of capital, and the employment of labour, in such pursuits.

The same apply to canals, railways, and roads. These have been made at great cost — at much cost are maintained — and are but the channels which lead to the nation's wealth.

To attempt to tax these is, therefore, as unwise as it

is unjust; and must ever involve a large amount of vexation, fraud, and perjury, from a natural desire to evade, for the purpose of avoiding injustice.

Nor is there, in these exemptions in favour of trade, any invidious or unjust distinction prejudicial to the agriculture of the country. In every country the land is to the State as the foundation-stone is to the building, — part and parcel of it, — so intimately connected with it as to be essential for its standing. Agriculture and trade, therefore, do not stand on the same footing with the State, and are not to be regulated altogether on the same principles, the land being essentially part and parcel of the State. That a land-owner ought not to regard his estate as a merchant his cargo, or a shop-keeper his stock, admits of easy proof from the different tenure of landed property, and from the purposes of agriculture itself, which are, ultimately, the same as those of the State. If the continuance and independence of the State be the object of agriculture, the final causes of the State must be the final causes of agriculture. If the negative ends of a State be attained — namely, its own safety — by means of its own strength, and the protection of person and property for all its members, there will then remain its positive ends : —

1. To make the means of subsistence more easy to each individual.
2. To secure to each of its members the hope of bettering his own condition or that of his children.
3. The development of those faculties which are essential to his humanity; that is, to his rational and moral being.

Such, at least, is the appointed aim of a State; and at whatever distance from the ideal mark the existing circumstances of a nation may unhappily place the actual statesman, still every movement ought to be in this direction. But the negative merit of not forwarding the debasement and virtual disfranchisement of any

class of the community, may be demanded of every State under all circumstances; and the Government that pleads difficulties in repulse, or demur, of this claim, impeaches its own wisdom and fortitude. But as the specific ends of agriculture are the maintenance, strength, and security of the State, so must its ultimate ends be the same as those of the State, even as the ultimate end of the spring and wheels of a watch must be the same as that of the watch.

An injurious system may be denounced, and redress and reform may be demanded; but reform, or innovation, not won from the free agent by the presentation of juster views and nobler interests, it were folly to propose, and worse than folly to attempt. Madmen only would dream of digging or blowing up the foundation of a house in order to employ the materials in repairing the walls. Nothing more can be asked of the State; no other duty is imposed on it, than to withhold or retract all extrinsic and artificial aids to an injurious system; to invalidate claims that, instead of being contained in the rights of its proprietary trustees, are encroachments on its own rights, and a destructive trespass on a part of its own inalienable and untransferable property — the health, strength, honesty, and filial love of its children.

It is a common and vulgar error to attribute the deprivation and suffering in this country to the great weight of taxation under which it labours. That this is a great evil is undoubted; and that it is the inevitable consequence of the extravagance and mismanagement of former Governments must be admitted.

But, though it be impossible to doubt that a high rate of taxation has operated as a clog on the progress of this country, yet it is demonstrable that taxes, the product of which is circulated in the country from which they are raised, can never seriously injure a

country directly by the mere amount, but either from the time or circumstances under which they are raised ; or, from the injudicious mode in which they are levied ; or, from the improper objects to which they are applied.

If the sum received in dividends on the National Debt were paid in taxes, and if these two sums precisely coincided in amount, and if there were no expenses of collection, and if the taxes did not interfere with the production of wealth, the National Debt would not diminish the national wealth, though it could not augment it.

It would be a mere matter of distribution. But the expense of collecting the national revenue, and the interference of taxation with production, are so much pure loss ; and, by the avowal of these two sources of expense and loss, we should be richer if we were relieved of the National Debt. But the capital of the National Debt of this country, although nominally large, has no real existence. It is, in fact, except as a *measure* of annuities, a mere fiction ; and if it were more correctly viewed, it would cease to create the uneasiness which is so frequently expressed about its amount. As Coleridge has no less truly than beautifully expressed it : — “ The sun may draw up the moisture from the river, the morass, and the ocean, to be given back in genial showers to the garden, the pasture, and the corn-field ; but it may, likewise, force upward the moisture from the fields of industry, to drop it on the stagnant pool, the saturated swamp, or the unprofitable sand-waste.” And, as he adds, the corruptions of a system can be duly appreciated by those only who have contemplated the system in that ideal state of perfection exhibited by the reason, — the nearest possible approximation to which, under existing circumstances, it is the business of prudential understanding to realise.

If, then, we would master the ideal of a beneficent and judicious system of finance, as the preliminary to all profitable insight into the defects of any particular system in actual existence, an apter illustration, perhaps, cannot be found than in those vast and fertile tracts of land in the East, which owe all their fertility to artificial irrigation.

The tanks and reservoirs would represent the capital of a nation ; while the numberless rills, hourly varying their channels and directions under the labourer's spade, would give a pleasing image of the dispersion of that capital through the whole population, by the joint effect of taxation and trade. For taxation itself is a part of commerce, and the Government may be fairly considered as a great manufacturing-house, carrying on in different places, by means of its partners and overseers, the trades of the ship-builder, the clothier, the iron-founder, and the like. As long as a balance is preserved between the receipts, and the returns, of government in their amount, quickness, and degree of dispersion ; as long as the due proportion obtains in the sums levied, to the mass in productive circulation ; so long does the wealth and circumstantial prosperity of the nation (its outward prosperity), remain unaffected ; or, rather, they will appear to increase in consequence of the additional *stimulus* given to the circulation itself by the reproductive action of all large capitals, and through the check which taxation, in its own nature, gives to the indolence of the wealthy, in its continual transfer of property to the industrious and enterprising. If different periods be taken, and if the comparative weight of the taxes at each be calculated, as it ought to be, not by the sum levied on each individual, but by the sum left in his possession, the settlement of the account will be in favour of the national wealth, to the amount of all the additional productive labour sustained, or ex-

cited, by the taxes, during the intervals between their afflux, and their re-absorption.

But, on the other hand, in a direct *ratio* to this increase, will be the distress produced by the disturbance of this balance, by the loss of this proportion; and the operation of the distress will be, at least, equal to the total amount of the difference between the taxes still levied, and the *quantum* of aid withdrawn from individuals by the abandonment of others; not overlooking the further quantum, which the taxes, that still remain, have ceased to give, by the altered mode of their re-dispersion. But to this we must add the number of persons raised, and reared, in consequence of the demand created by the preceding state of things, and now discharged from their occupations: whether the latter belong exclusively to the executive power, as that of soldiers, and the like, or from those in which the labourers for the nation in general are already sufficiently numerous. Both these classes are thrown back on the public, and sent to a table where every seat is pre-occupied. The employment lessens as the number of men to be employed is increased; and not merely in the same, but from additional, causes; and, from the indirect consequences of those already stated, in a far greater *ratio*. For, it may easily happen, that the very same change which had produced this dispersion at home, may, from equivalent causes, have embarrassed the countries in commercial connection with us. At one and the same time, the great customer at home wants less, and our customers abroad are able to buy less.

The conjoint action of these circumstances will furnish, for a mind capable of combining them, a sufficient solution of the melancholy fact. They cannot but occasion much distress, much obstruction; and these again, in their re-action, are sure to be more than doubled by the still greater, and universal, alarm, and

by the consequent check of confidence, and enterprise, which they never fail to produce.

Now, it is a notorious fact, that these causes have all existed to a very extraordinary degree, and worked with united strength, in this country, since the termination of the long war. It was one among the many anomalies of that war, that it acted, after a few years, as a universal stimulant. We almost monopolised the commerce of the world. The high wages of our artisans, and the high prices of agricultural produce, intercirculated. Leases of no unusual length, not seldom enabled the provident and thrifty farmer to purchase the estate he had rented. Everywhere might be seen roads, railways, docks, canals, made, making, and projected; villages swelling into towns, while the metropolis surrounded itself, and became (as it were) set with new cities. Finally, in spite of all the waste and havoc of a twenty years' war, the population of the empire was increased by more than two millions. The efforts and war expenditure of the nation, and the yearly revenue, were augmented in the same proportion; and to all this must be added the fact, that the war was at last brought to its conclusion by a concentration, or by a spasm of energy, and, consequently, by an anticipation of our resources. We conquered by compelling reversionary power into alliance with our existing and natural strength. The first intoxication of triumph having passed over, this agony of glory was succeeded, of course, by a general stiffness and relaxation. The antagonistic passions came into play; financial solicitude was blended with constitutional and political jealousies, and both were exacerbated by personal imprudences, the chief injury of which consisted in their own tendency to disgust, and alienate, the public feeling. And, with all this, the financial errors and prejudices, even of the more educated classes —

in short, the general want or imperfection of clear views, and a scientific insight into the true effects and influences of taxation, and the mode of its operation—became now a real misfortune, and opened an additional source of temporary embarrassment. Retrenchment could no longer proceed by cautious and calculated steps, but was compelled to hurry forward, like one who, crossing the sands at too late an hour, finds himself threatened by the inrush of the tide. Nevertheless, it was a truth, susceptible of little less than mathematical demonstration, that the more and the more suddenly the revenue was diminished by the abandonment of the war taxes, the greater would be the disturbance of the balance; so that the agriculturist, the manufacturer, or the tradesman,—all, in short, but annuitants and fixed stipendiaries,—who, during the war, having paid as five, had fifteen left behind, but shortly had less than ten, after having paid but two and a half. What was the pressure then placed upon the country when to all this is added the operation of the return to cash payments, in *pure* coin, of former intrinsic value, so as, in effect, to reimpose the amount of taxes nominally remitted, may be easily understood.

And yet, under all this pressure, the power and prosperity of the nation has been increasing during the same period, with an accelerated force unprecedented in any country!

To a combination of many causes must this be attributed, but chiefly to vast resources brought into activity by the energy, labour, and skill of a multitude of enterprising individuals, encouraged and assisted by the timely relaxation of many of those bonds, and fetters, by which the trade and productive industry of the country had been bound down and restricted. By increasing, and cheapening, the food of the people, and leaving them more free to labour and to produce, and

thereby to accumulate new capital for further employment and further enterprise, and thus increasing and extending the wealth and power of the nation.

If the causes of the many and serious evils, here referred to, have been so far diminished in number, and mitigated in effect, by the adoption in practice of these new and improved principles of legislation, how great is the encouragement to proceed in the same line of improvement!

The universal practice, consequent on the present system, of enhancing the sale price of every article subject to taxation, to remunerate the dealer for his advance of the amount of the tax in the first instance, calculated not only at the rate of trade profit, but also on the presumption of bad debts, and this additional per-centage repeated at each intermediate stage of its elaboration and distribution, from the grower, or importer, or manufacturer, to the last retailer exclusively, is not one of the least operative evils inflicted on the whole community. Necessary, and, therefore, justifiable, as this plan of reprisal by anticipation may be in the case of each individual dealer, yet, taken collectively, and without reference to persons, the system itself which, not only authorises, but also renders necessary this sort of nondescript privateering is rather startling to an unfamiliarised conscience; and, by a curious anomaly, these exactions are not promiscuous, only because the letters of marquee and reprisal, under this system, grant a free pass to the offending party.

Or, if the law maxim, *volentibus non fit injuria*, be applicable in this case, it may perhaps be described more courteously as a benefit society of all the careful and honest men in the kingdom, to pay the debts of the dishonest or improvident. It is mentioned here, however, as one of the inevitable consequences of the present system of laying the taxes on things in common

use for the daily necessities of life, and as one of the principal appendages to the twin paramount causes, the present state of the currency, and the national debt, and for the sake of the conjoint results. If we would learn what these results are,—some may be seen in the 30,000 unemployed workmen now (1857) parading the streets of London without work, and almost without food or clothing; in the country, a peasantry sinking into pauperism, step for step with the rise of the farmers' profits, and indulgences.

Fluctuation in the wages of labour, alternate privation and excess (not in all at the same time, but successively in each), consequent improvidence, and, over all, discontent, and a system of factious confederacy: these form the history of our cities, towns, and country. On the side of the landlord, and his compeers, the presence of the same causes are attested by answerable effects. Great as their effects were on the increase of prices in the necessities of life, they were still greater, disproportionally greater, in all articles of show and luxury. With few exceptions, it became difficult, and at length impracticable, for the gentry of the land, for the possessors of fixed property, to retain the rank of their ancestors, or of their own former establishments, without joining in the general competition for sudden and inordinate gains. The temptation of obtaining more than the legal interest for their principal, became more and more strong with all persons who, neither trading nor farming, had lived on the interest of their fortunes. It was in this class that the rash, and, too frequently, the unprincipled projector, found his readiest dupes. The secret history of too many of the joint stock speculations only in the vicinity of the metropolis, would supply an afflicting, but instructive, comment.

Not that these were results of an increased *momentum* in the spirit of trade, but of the system which restricted

trade, and impeded it in its natural channels, by artificial obstructions, thereby forcibly diverting it into unnatural channels, where it soon dried up, leaving only a sandy and desert waste, with little or nothing of a fertilising deposit; and, so far from extending, checking the commercial spirit of the nation, and, at the same time, as an inevitable consequence, depressing the agricultural; for in this country at least, if not in all countries, the agricultural must ever be inseparable from, and in a great measure dependant on, the commercial interest.

Many and great have been, and are, the evils which have afflicted this country, but so greatly have all these been aggravated by the operation of our revenue laws, reflected in the habits, and tendencies, of the labouring classes especially, that here, it may be truly said, is the ground-work of our national calamity, and the main predisposing cause of all our past, and present, distresses. If the spirit of commerce were only now set free, she would carry such healing on her wings, the strength of the nation would soon be so increased, and the people would soon bear their burdens so easily, that past errors would soon be forgotten, and they would remember their afflictions no more.

But, if the wings be pinioned, and confined, by a much longer continuance of the present vicious system of taxation, the natural and certain increase of population, which must become excessive — with reference to the means of employment and subsistence — with all the furies that follow in its train, will produce a state of things so opposed to the simplicity of nature, that Heaven itself will almost be deprived of the power of conferring blessings on the nation, and even a superabundant harvest will be complained of as an evil, and the recurrence of the same as a ruinous calamity. Princely capitals will still be accumulated, but will be but telegraphs of coming troubles; of the return of

those times of frequent failures, with all the disgraceful secrets of fraud and folly, of unprincipled vanity in expending, and desperate speculation in retrieving; when bankruptcies spread like a fever, at once contagious and epidemic; when no man's treasure is safe who has adopted the ordinary means of safety, neither the high nor the humble; when the lords' rents and the farmers' store, entrusted, perhaps but as yesterday, are asked after at closed doors! — but, worst of all, in its moral influences, as well as in the cruelty of suffering; when the old labourer's savings, or, as Coleridge expressively and truly calls them — “the precious robberies of self-denial from every day's comforts;” when the orphan's funds, the widow's livelihood, the fond confiding sister's humble fortune, are found among the victims to the remorseless mania of dishonest speculation, or the desperate cowardice of embarrassment; to the drunken stupor of a usurious selfishness which, for a few months' respite, dares incur a debt of guilt and infamy, for which the grave itself can plead no statute of limitation.

This is the character which Milton has so philosophically, as well as sublimely, embodied in the Satan of his “Paradise Lost.” Alas! too often has it been embodied in real life. Too often has it given a dark and savage grandeur to the historie page. And, whenever it has appeared, under whatever circumstances of time and country, the same ingredients have gone to its composition; and it has been identified by the same attributes, so forcibly described by Coleridge as “Hope in which there is no cheerfulness; steadfastness within, and immovable resolve, with outward restlessness and whirling activity; violence with guile; tenacity with cunning; and, as the result of all, interminableness of object, with perfect indifference of means.”

“But,” as Coleridge asks, “by what means can the lower classes be made to learn their duties, and urged

to practise them? The human race may, perhaps, possess the capability of all excellence, and Truth is omnipotent to a mind already disciplined for its reception; but, assuredly, the over-worked labourer, skulking into an ale-house, is not likely to exemplify the one, or prove the other. In that barbarous tumult of inimical interests which the present state of society exhibits, *religion* appears to offer the only means universally *efficient*. The perfectness of future men is, indeed, a benevolent tenet, and may operate on a few visionaries, whose studious habits supply them with employment, and seclude them from temptation. But a distant prospect, which we are never to reach, will seldom quicken our footsteps, however lovely it may appear; and a blessing, which not ourselves, but *posterity* are destined to enjoy, will scarcely influence the actions of *any* — still less of the ignorant, the prejudiced, and the selfish.

“Go preach the Gospel to the poor.” By its simplicity it will meet their comprehension, by its benevolence soften their affections, by its precepts it will direct their conduct, by the vastness of its motives ensure their obedience.

The situation of the poor is perilous: they are, indeed, both “from within and from without, *unarmed* to all temptations.” Prudential reasonings will, in general, be powerless with them; for the incitements of this world are weak, in proportion as we are wretched. They, too, who live *from hand to mouth* will most frequently become improvident. Possessing no *stock* of happiness, they eagerly seize the gratifications of the moment, and snatch the froth from the wave as it passes by them. Nor is the desolate state of their families a restraining motive, unsoftened as they are by education, and benumbed into selfishness by the torpedo touch of extreme want. Domestic affections depend on associa-

tion. We love an object if, as often as we see or recollect it, an agreeable sensation arises in our minds. But, alas! how should *he* glow with the charities of father and husband, who, gaining scarcely more than his own necessities demand, must have been accustomed to regard his wife and children, not as the soothers of finished labour, but as rivals for the insufficient meal! In a man so circumstanced, the tyranny of the *present* can be overpowered only by the tenfold mightiness of the *future*. Religion will cheer his gloom with her promises, and, by habituating his mind to anticipate an infinitely great revolution hereafter, may prepare it even for the sudden reception of a less degree of amelioration in this world.

But, if we would confer this spiritual and mental benefit, we must not neglect the physical and bodily welfare. We must not make the free gift of the spiritual remedy an excuse for withholding what is due to the bodily maintenance and comfort.

If the revenue laws in question were but half as productive of money to the state, as they are of guilt and wretchedness to the people, there might then, perhaps, be the miserable ground of sad necessity for their further continuance. But, if this mode of raising revenue be attended with greater loss in actual money than the whole amount raised, and if all the consequent guilt and wretchedness to the people be an addition to this loss, then, indeed, is this system an absurdity, as well as a shame and disgrace to the nation which continues it; and it is a mockery to tell people who are thus, by unjust laws, deprived of all worldly comforts, that they have the comforts of religion.

The happiness of mankind is the *end* of virtue, and truth is the knowledge of the *means*; which he will never seriously attempt to discover, who has not habitually interested himself in the welfare of others. The searcher

after truth must love and be beloved; for general benevolence is begotten, and rendered permanent, by social and domestic affections. Let us beware of that proud philosophy which affects to inculcate philanthropy while it denounces every home-born feeling by which it is produced and nurtured. The paternal and filial duties discipline the heart, and prepare it for the love of all mankind. The intensity of private attachments encourages, not prevents, universal benevolence. The nearer we approach to the sun, the more intense his heat: yet what corner of the system does he not cheer and vivify?

We cannot inculcate on the minds of each other too often, or with too great earnestness, the necessity of cultivating benevolent affections. We should be cautious how we indulge the feelings of even virtuous indignation. We should remember that vice is the effect of error, and the offspring of surrounding circumstances; the object, therefore, of condolence, not of anger. But to make it spread from the understanding to the affections, to call it into action, not only in the great exertions of patriotism, but in the daily, and hourly, occurrences of social life, requires the most watchful attentions of the most energetic mind. It is not enough that we have once swallowed these truths—we must feed on them, as insects on a leaf, till the whole heart be coloured by its qualities, and show its food in every the minutest fibre.

If the people would unite and take counsel together, and with moral fortitude, and national faith, with patriotic loyalty, and with universal benevolence, would make their appeal to the Government of the country, for the removal of these most obnoxious and injurious revenue laws, and the substitution of more open, just, and simple laws, for the due provision of the proper means and maintenance of the necessary powers of the

state; if the land-owners would consider themselves as holding offices of trust, with duties to be performed in the sight of God and their country, and would concern themselves in the education, as well as in the instruction, of their natural dependants; and if the manufacturers and traders, and all the other working classes, would concern themselves with their own separate and peculiar duties, and learn to appreciate the honour due to their respective callings, by the faithfulness of their fulfilment, — then may the people of all classes rely upon the promise of the King of kings, by the mouth of his prophet —

“Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters.”

Many of the foregoing observations are taken from the writings of that great moral philosopher and poet, Coleridge, and in his own words, when these could be properly applied; but often in a manner different from their original application. For, however abounding in high thoughts was that great man, and however rich in varied and expressive language; however many he may have helped to make distinguished writers on political economy, he will, in these days, himself hardly be regarded as an authority on this subject. But honour to his memory, who has taught many of the best and greatest men of these times to think and to reflect, and whose name, as long as men are able to appreciate the noblest qualities of the human mind, when directed to the highest aims, will be held in grateful remembrance by his countrymen!

Nor will many of the writers, distinguished in these days as authorities on subjects of political economy, be so regarded by posterity. When one, who is esteemed high amongst these, has laid it down as a principle, and with general assent, that “it is impossible to regard

such taxes as really fall on capital, as permanent sources of public income, and that it is not from capital, but from revenue, that all permanent taxes should be derived;" and when this is taken, and with general concurrence, as the strong ground for conclusive reasoning against a system of *direct* taxation, it requires no great discernment to see, that from ground so loose and ill-defined, no safe conclusions can be drawn; nor much foresight to pronounce that, on such ground as this, no permanent system can be formed.

Capital may be shortly described as the accumulated *savings* of income; and it may be admitted that, as capital is diminished, in the same proportion are diminished "the means of employing and facilitating labour, and, consequently, the annual produce of the country." But to apply this as a principle against *direct* taxation, is altogether illogical, and manifestly erroneous. If the effect of *direct* taxation be to diminish capital, then the principle is correctly applied, and the consequence assumed may be supposed to follow. But to assume, without proof, that capital is diminished by *direct* taxation, is assuming a consequence from premises which are denied. The property and income-tax, as now levied, is a direct tax on property; but does this necessarily diminish capital? May it not altogether be paid out of income? And is it not, in fact, generally so paid? If so, why is a property-tax, any more than an income-tax, a tax upon capital? The diminution of income by a heavy tax may, and often does, lead to a diminution of capital; but that incidence applies equally to all taxes, direct or indirect; and obviously depends, not on the nature, but on the amount, of the tax. If the tax were so heavy in amount, that it could be met only by a sacrifice of part of the capital, that would be a tax upon capital; and might be so heavy, as to be a confiscation of property.

But such a tax has never been proposed in this country, in modern times, nor is ever likely to be again; and, therefore, it cannot be to such a case as this that the writer in question refers. No doubt, the effect of such a tax would be, as the same writer adds, "The misapplication and destruction of the means of production, which would not only defeat every attempt to render it permanent, but would, by impoverishing and exhausting the country, render all other taxes completely unproductive."

This may be sufficient to show that the pretended distinction, as commonly used, between *direct* and *indirect* taxation, is no distinction at all, but only a confusion of terms, calculated to deceive. The tendency of all taxes is, no doubt, to press upon capital; but not necessarily to diminish it.

But, if such be the tendency, as must be admitted, it can be clearly shown, and here is shown, that such tendency is much stronger in indirect, than in direct, taxes. There is, in all taxes, more or less of a counteracting effect, by the inducement, or necessity, to increased industry and skill, to repair the loss to those who pay them; but the loss is not less, nor less felt, from those taxes which are indirect, and hidden in meal and malt, than from those which are taken directly and openly from property. But the fair inference is, that the beneficially counteracting influence, in the inducement to increased exertion to repair the loss, is much stronger when that loss is clearly seen and known, than when unseen and unknown, though not unfelt. The one may be compared to a healthy invigorating action, renewing and bracing up all the natural energies of body and mind; and the other to a slow poison, insidiously pervading the whole system, producing exhaustion and depression of body and mind, but without any clear insight into the cause; making the people

poorer and poorer, by degrees, but without their knowing exactly why or how.

The writer, before quoted, describes a tax "to be *direct* when it is immediately taken from property or labour; and *indirect* when it is taken from them by making their owners pay for liberty to use certain articles, or to exercise certain privileges." Assuming this definition, mark his reasons for his preference. He says:—"Indirect taxes have, with few exceptions, been the greatest favourites both of princes and subjects, and there are very sufficient reasons for the preference of which they have so generally been the objects. The burden of direct taxation is palpable and obvious. It admits of no disguise or concealment, but makes every one fully sensible of the exact amount of his income taken by Government. We are all, however, extremely averse from parting with property, except we obtain some more acceptable equivalent in its stead. And the benefits derived from the institution of government, though of the highest importance, being neither so very obvious nor striking, as to be readily felt and appreciated by the bulk of the people, there is, in the great majority of cases, a strong disinclination to the payment of direct taxes. *For this reason*, Governments have generally had recourse to those that are *indirect*. Instead of exciting the prejudices of their subjects by openly demanding a portion of their incomes, they have taxed the articles on which these incomes are usually expended. *This ingenious plan conceals the amount of taxation, and makes its payment appear in some measure voluntary*. The tax being generally paid, in the first instance, by the producers, *the purchasers confound it with the natural price of the commodity*. No separate demand being made upon them for the tax, *it escapes their recollection*; and the article which they receive *seems* the fair equivalent of the sacrifice made in

acquiring it. Such taxes have also the advantage of being paid by degrees, in small portions, and at the time when the commodities are wanted for consumption; or, when it is most convenient for the consumers to pay them."

Now, the meaning of all this, in a few words, is, that the Government intentionally deceives the people, and that the people, willing to be deceived, connive at the deception.

If this be so, the question, whether this deceit and connivance, on the one side or the other, be for the benefit of the Government or the people, still remains the same. If this "*ingenious plan*" of concealment really lighten the burden, nothing can be said against it; but if, on the contrary, it increase the burden, and greatly aggravate the evil, whether the people consent or not (for, if they consent, it can only be in ignorance), then this "*ingenious plan*" is nothing less than a disgraceful fraud.

The real question, therefore, is in no degree advanced by this view. But when the chief argument in favour of any measure rests on concealment, that alone affords strong ground for suspicion that something unfavourable to a fair conclusion is concealed. The pretended "advantage of being paid by degrees, in small portions," is very like a recommendation of slow poisons, because they may be administered "by degrees, in small portions."

What if our revenue laws do depress and diminish the trade and manufactures of the country,—do deprive the labourer of the fair reward of his industry,—sink all the labouring classes, more or less, in guilt and wretchedness,—what, then, is this "*ingenious plan of concealment*," but a shameful trick, and not less disgraceful fraud upon the people, because, in their ignorance, they have so far connived at it as to permit it?

Not on such ground as this, however ingenious the plan, can it be much longer maintained. When the eyes of the people are opened, and when they see the enormity of the evil, and the great amount of unnecessary suffering thereby inflicted upon them, they will no longer consent; and then the Government will find out that the most ingenious plan is, to consult the real welfare of the people. To open the eyes of the people that they may clearly distinguish between good and evil,—may see their own good, and wisely seek it,—is the present object. To show them their true position, and that the true interests of all Governments and people are identical, and inseparable; that no mixture of evil is ever necessary for any really good purpose; and those who act as if it were, are really doing evil that good may come, or, in other words, serving the devil that God may serve them? What folly for a man to do that now, which he must certainly undo again by repentance, or be undone for ever! That is a dangerous cant, as Archbishop Whately says, now-a-days heard so often,—“There is *some* truth in so and so.” *Some* truth! yes; the serpent had some truth in what he said; the forbidden tree *was* a tree of knowledge. And there was some truth in Eve’s reflections. It was “pleasant to the eye,” and desirable “to make one wise.” Here was the love of the beautiful, and of knowledge, in the very first sin that was committed.

The first step to show the people their true position, is the simplification of the public accounts, that the people may understand them. Instead of mystifying, to confuse and deceive, it is the duty, as well as the policy, of every Government to simplify, for the purpose of making clear and intelligible to all. Against the authority, here quoted, for mystification and deception, the following opinion of the late Sir Robert Peel may be quoted for those who may be disposed to look back

to him as an authority on this subject. In his speech on moving the appointment of a Finance Committee, 15th February, 1828, he said:—"There is one point on which I have always had a strong feeling. I allude to the advantage and necessity of a simplification of the public accounts. No man is more desirous than I am to see the public accounts presented in the simplest possible form. I see no reason why we should not, in this respect, follow the example set us by France, and the United States of America. I am quite certain that we should do well to profit by such examples, and I can see no disadvantage attending it."

And again:—"I am convinced that nothing can be more fruitless or impolitic than to introduce anything like mystification, or suppression, into a view of the public finances of the empire. These matters are, I take it, much more simple than they appear to be on the face of ordinary official statements of them. There is, in fact, not the slightest difference between the calculations formed upon many millions, and upon a few pounds, or between the expenditure of a humble individual, and that of a rich and powerful country. They depend upon the same principles, and must be governed by the same laws; and one might as well contend that the rules of arithmetic applying to the sums with which we ordinarily deal in the course of domestic occurrences—that those rules do not apply to the division or subdivision of many millions of money, as to suppose that the finances of a country, however great or important she may be, must not, after all, rest on the same principles, and be governed by the same rule, as the finances of an individual."

It is quite true that the speeches in Parliament of Sir Robert Peel may be referred to in support of almost any view, of almost any question, of state policy, which ever came before him as a statesman; and that his im-

perfect perception, or acknowledgment, of any fixed principle for guidance, renders him but an uncertain authority on any great question of state policy. But, to make this more apparent, a greater distance of time must have intervened. In the mean time he may be assumed to be, at least, an equal authority, on the question of taxation, to the authority before quoted; and, therefore, to those who think so, the following opinion, expressed by Sir Robert Peel, in his place in the House of Commons, in his speech on the Income Tax, on the 23rd March, 1842, may appear worthy of notice. Speaking of all taxes, direct or indirect, as bearing more or less unequally on those who pay them, he said:—"All indirect taxation has a natural tendency to produce injustice, and I have ever thought that the chief argument relied on in opposition to the taxation of articles of consumption was, that if beer, or any such article, were exposed to it, the tax always operated unjustly." And in a former debate on taxation, on the 30th April, 1833, he said:—"Indirect taxation may be carried too far. It has limits, beyond which it gives rise to smuggling, and defeats the object in view."

And in this view, he seems to have been strengthened by experience, for in making his financial statement to the House of Commons on the 11th March, 1842, he spoke as follows:—"If, then, it is necessary for me to have fresh taxation, shall I lay it upon articles of subsistence—upon those articles which may appear to some superfluities, but which are now become almost the necessities of life? I cannot consent to increase the taxation upon articles of subsistence consumed by the great body of the labouring portion of the community. I do think that you have had conclusive proof that you have arrived at the limits of profitable taxation on articles of subsistence. I advise you not to increase taxation in this respect; for if you do, most assuredly you will be defeated in your object."

If, then, this be a true and safe view, and who can really doubt it, why should not the government, and people of this country, cordially co-operate for that which most concerns the common interests of all, for the establishment of the wisest and best system of taxation which human ingenuity can devise, not by stealthy and indirect, but by open and direct means? And what is there in the plan here proposed, which any party or class of the people can fairly complain of?

The land, as already shown, is the foundation-stone of the State; on the security of which the safety and prosperity of all depends. As such it is respected and preserved. All its just rights and privileges are proposed to be maintained on the sound basis of equal protection to all descriptions of property. But this supposes a distribution of the burdens of the State equally over all. One large and direct tax is proposed to be levied on all landed property and houses; and the same on all other descriptions of realised property; and this being a direct tax, easily levied, and collected at a comparatively trifling cost, will pass directly from the contributors, into the Exchequer of the State, without any of those fearful diminutions from hosts of revenue officers, and those inseparable consequences, fraud and negligence; and, still more important, without any of those injurious consequences to the trade and manufactures of the country which must ever attend upon the present system. As already shown, the land would then bear only a just proportion of the burden, and, in effect, less than it bears now. The local burdens, which must necessarily fall on land, would remain the same; unless, as may be reasonably expected from the increased prosperity of the country, the present dead weight of the poor rate be greatly diminished, which would be so much relief in favour of the land.

In addition to all these great, but appreciable gains,

would be those still greater, but inappreciable, advantages to the whole nation, in the escape from all the confusion, and demoralising effects, of the present system, to a system of simplicity and clearness, which would "admit of no disguise or concealment, but would make every one fully sensible of the exact amount of his income taken by Government;" and would thereby admit of those wholesome checks upon Government, which, after all, are the best securities for good government, for the real welfare and happiness of the people, and for the greatness and prosperity of the nation.

The whole income of the country would then be reduced to five heads, including the whole taxation under four heads. The revenue from the crown lands, and the taxes derived from four sources, would then constitute the whole income of the nation. The expenditure of this income by the Government, which is now theoretically, but not practically, would then be, both theoretically, and practically, under the control of the people; or, if otherwise, it would then be their own fault. It is in vain for the people to talk of Administrative Reform, until they have obtained this control; and the first step towards this is a full and correct understanding of the real state of the accounts, which can only be obtained by an accurate knowledge of the receipts and payments. This, of course, is only common prudence in the conduct of every private family; and, as Adam Smith has said, "What is prudence in the conduct of every private family, can scarce be folly in that of a great kingdom." To an honest and well-meaning Government, an exact knowledge of the revenue and expenditure of the nation cannot be less desirable, than to the people; and the greater the revenue and expenditure, the more important is this knowledge for guarding against unnecessary expenses. As shrewdly remarked by Archbishop Whately, it is a

curious circumstance, and the reverse of what many would expect, that the expenses called for by a real, or *imagined*, necessity of those who have large incomes, are greater in proportion than those of persons with slenderer means; and that, consequently, a larger proportion of what are called the rich are in embarrassed circumstances, than of the poorer. This is often overlooked, because the *absolute number* of those with large incomes is so much less, that, of course, the absolute number of persons under pecuniary difficulties, in the poorer classes, must form a very great majority. But if you look to the *proportions*, it is quite the reverse. Take the number of persons of each amount of income, divided into classes, from 100*l.* per annum up to 100,000*l.* per annum, and you will find the per-centage of those who are under pecuniary difficulties *continually augmenting* as you go upwards. And when you come to sovereign States, whose revenues are reckoned by millions, you will hardly find *one* that is not deeply involved in debt! So that it would appear that the larger the income, the harder it is to live within it.

When men of great revenues live in splendour and sensuality, they are apt to plead that this is *expected* of them; which may be, perhaps, sometimes true, in the sense that such conduct is anticipated as *probable*; not true, as implying that it is required, or approved. A person may fairly expect that another who has received kindnesses from him should protect him in distress; yet he may have reason to expect that he will not. "England expects every man to do his duty;" but it would be chimerical to expect a universal performance of duty. What may be reasonably expected (in one sense of the word) must be precisely the practice of the majority; since it is the majority of instances that constitutes *probability*. What may reasonably be expected (in the other sense) is something much beyond the practice of

the generality ; as long, at least, as it shall be true, that "narrow is the way that leadeth to life, and few there be that find it."

What, then, may be expected from Governments it is needless to say ; but, as sure as the majority of instances constitutes probability, so surely may the people expect that, if they do not themselves understand, and look after their own interests, they will be mismanaged, and the expenditure of public monies will not be always regulated by a due regard to public interests.

The argument of Coleridge, before quoted, may be true with regard to the effects of taxation ; but this argument often used, and not carefully applied, may mislead, and does mislead, not a few, as to the produce of those taxes, the expenditure of which is amongst our own fellow subjects. Powder, and guns, and ships of war, cost a great deal ; but this cost is a gain to the manufacturers of powder, guns, &c. And thus, some people bring themselves to fancy that the country altogether does not sustain any loss at all. Of course, if a heavy expenditure be incurred in armaments, when necessary for the defence of our just rights, this is not to be accounted a waste, any more than the cost of bolts and locks to keep out thieves. But the argument, as often used, does not at all look to any such necessity, but would equally hold good if the money had been expended in gunpowder to be expended in fireworks, or in paying soldiers for amusing us with sham fights. For, in that case, also, the expenditure would have gone to *our own* people equally.

The fallacy consists in not perceiving, that though the labour of the gunpowder makers, soldiers, &c., is not unproductive to *them*, inasmuch as they are paid for it, it is unproductive to *us*, as it leaves no valuable results. If gunpowder be employed in blasting rocks, so as to

open a rich vein of ore, or coal, or to make a useful road, the manufacturer gets his payment for it just the same as if it had been made into fireworks; but, then, the mine, or the road, will remain as an article of wealth to him who has so employed it. After having paid for the powder, he will be still richer than he was before; whereas, if he had employed it for fireworks, he would have been so much the poorer, since it would have left no results.

When, however, war expenditure does result in the conquest of some territory, and this territory brings in some tribute, or other profit, beyond the cost of conquering it, and keeping it in subjection, — which is not often the case, — then, it must be admitted, — waiving all considerations of justice, and humanity, — that something has been gained. But the revenue, thus wrested from a subjugated country, must evidently impoverish the one party, as much (at least) as it enriches the other.

On the other hand, the revenue derived from other lands, by commerce, enriches *both* parties; since the exchange of a cargo of hardware, for instance, for a cargo of silks, implies that the one who parts with the silk, for the hardware, finds the latter the *more* valuable to him, and *vice versa*. And thus, both *advance* in prosperity.

And thus, as Archbishop Whately observes, — from whose valuable writings many of the foregoing remarks are taken, — “thus it may be regarded as a general rule, that states are not exempt from the influences of the same causes which, in the affairs of individuals, produce good or bad success. That the general tendency of each particular virtue, and vice, in individuals is to produce corresponding worldly advantages, and disadvantages, is a doctrine which, in a speculative point of view, at least, few would be disposed to controvert. And

though this general rule admits of such numerous exceptions, that a right-minded, and considerate, man would not venture, in the case of any individual, to infer that his success in life had precisely corresponded with his deserts; or, decidedly to promise, for example, prosperity to the honest, frugal, and industrious, and denounce certain ruin to the profligate; yet he would not feel less convinced of the certainty of the general rule,—that such conduct will, for the most part, be attended with such consequences.

“Thus, though we are not to believe that regular *temporal* rewards, and punishments, are dispersed under the moral government of God to nations; yet, the general rule by which temperance, and integrity, and industry tend, in private life, to promote each man’s health, and reputation, and prosperity, is applicable to nations also. Unprincipled aggression will, usually, provoke, sooner or later, a formidable retaliation; and, on the other hand, moderation and good faith have manifestly a general tendency to promote peace and internal prosperity.

“And thus it is that religion, which produces these fruits of moderation, and good faith, has an indirect, as well as a direct, influence on national character. Its direct effects few will be disposed to deny. But it has an indirect effect also, through its influence on national prosperity. To take, for instance, war, the direct demoralising effects of which are, probably, still greater than its impoverishing effect, would be wholly unknown, if Christianity were heartily, and generally, embraced; and, even as it is, it has been much mitigated by that humanising influence. Slavery, too, equally demoralising and impoverishing, would cease; and if both slavery, and war, were at an end, the wealth of nations would increase, but their civilisation, in the most important points, would increase in a still greater ratio.

“That this progressive civilization—this advancement of mankind, not merely as individuals, but as communities—is the design of the Almighty Creator, seems evident from the provision made by His Divine wisdom for the *progress* of society. And, perhaps, the best proof that it is the design of Almighty Providence that mankind should advance in civilisation, is to be found in the fact that, in proportion as the religion of the Bible is embraced, and men become subjects to the *revealed* law of God, civilisation progresses.

“But the evidence is no less clear that, for this end, constant watchfulness is necessary; and that, by the checks thus provided against that universal tendency to evil which all know to exist, but the origin of which none can explain, states, as well as people, are guided, or forced, into the right but narrow way.

“That the advancement in national wealth should be, on the whole, favourable to moral improvement, may be presumed from what we know of the Divine dispensations. We know that God placed the human species in such a situation, and endued them with such faculties, and propensities, as would infallibly tend to the advancement of society in wealth, and in all the arts of life; instead of either creating man a different kind of being, or leaving him in that wild, and uninstructed, state from which he could never have emerged. Now, if the natural consequence of this advancement be, a continual progress from bad to worse—if the increase of wealth, and the development of the intellectual powers, tend not to the improvement, but rather to the depravation, of the moral character—we may safely pronounce this to be at variance with all analogy, a complete reversal of every other appointment that we see throughout creation.

“And it is completely at variance with the revealed Will of God. For the great impediments to progress

are war, and dissension of every kind, insecurity of property, indolence in our own affairs, and neglect of providing for ourselves, and for those dependent on us. Now, God has forbidden man to kill and to steal. He has inculcated on him gentleness, honesty, submission to lawful authority, and industry in providing for his own household. If, therefore, the advancement in national wealth—which is found to be, by the appointment of Providence, the result of obedience to these precepts—if this advancement naturally tend to counteract that improvement of the moral character, which the same God has pointed out to us as the great business of this life, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion, that He has given contradictory commands; that He has directed us to pursue a course of action which leads to an end the very opposite of what we are required by Himself to aim at.

“But the opposite conclusion is surely much more in accordance with reason and experience, as with every rational wish, that as the Most High has evidently formed society with a tendency to advancement in national wealth, so He has designed, and fitted, us to advance, by means of that, in virtue, and true wisdom, and happiness.

“To pretend to despise riches is a common form of hypocritical deceit, and one against which Lord Bacon guarded men in his time, when he said, “Believe not much them that seem to despise riches.” The declaimers on the incompatibility of wealth, and virtue, are mere declaimers, and nothing more. For you will often find them, in the next breath, condemning or applauding every measure, or institution, according to its supposed tendency to increase, or diminish, wealth. You will find them not only readily accepting wealth themselves from any honourable source, and anxious to secure from poverty their children, and all most dear

to them, but even offering up solemn prayers to Heaven for the prosperity of their native country, and contemplating with joy a flourishing condition of her agriculture, manufactures, or commerce; in short, of the sources of her wealth.

“The goods of this world are not at all a trifling concern to Christians, considered *as* Christians. Whether, indeed, we ourselves shall have enjoyed a large, or a small, share of them, will be of no importance to us a hundred years hence; but it will be of the greatest importance whether we shall have employed the faculties, and opportunities, granted to us, in the increase and diffusion of those benefits amongst others. For, in regard to wealth, as well as all those things good in themselves, more depends on the use we make of these bounties of Providence, than on the advantages themselves. They *are*, in themselves, goods; and it is our part, instead of affecting ungratefully to slight or to complain of God’s gifts, to endeavour to make them *good to us*, by studying to use them aright, and to promote, through them, the best interests of ourselves, and our fellow creatures. Every situation in which man can be placed has, along with its own peculiar advantages, its own peculiar difficulties and trials also, which we are called on to exert our faculties in providing against. The most fertile soil does not necessarily bear the most abundant harvest; its weeds, if neglected, will grow the rankest. And the servant who has received but one talent, if he put it out to use, will fare better than he who has been entrusted with five, if he squander or bury, them. But still, this last does not suffer *because* he received five talents, but because he has not used them to advantage.”

Such are the sound, but solemn, views of Archbishop Whately on riches.

It is better to understand all things rightly, and by

duly estimating the value of things in this world, we shall, probably, form a more correct estimate of the value of things beyond.

These general remarks are here introduced for the purpose of showing, that prosperity in riches, and other good things of this world, are not to be undervalued, either by a nation, or by individuals; but, on the contrary, that it is equally the duty of both, by all just and lawful means, to seek to obtain them, and then to use them well and wisely; and the conclusion is this, that it is one of the first duties of every people which compose a nation, to look to their ways, and to mind their own affairs.

Now, the first step to minding one's own affairs, is to understand them; and this should be the first object of a free and intelligent people. By far the greatest part of the evils in this, and in every other country, may be traced to bad legislation; a cause which never could have existed, or, at least, never would have been permitted to continue, if the people had better understood their own affairs. It is impossible to suppose that the sacrifice of vast wealth, on the part of a whole people, for the gain—and that, comparatively a trifling gain—of a handful of monopolists, would have been submitted to, patiently, so often and so long as it has been, as a necessary effect of the system pursued, if that system had been better understood, and the effect seen. But the fact is, the gain has been *concentrated*, and the loss diffused. This would not have occurred so often as it has, were it not that this diffusion of the loss causes its existence—that is, its existence as a loss so increased—to be unperceived. If thirty millions of persons are each virtually taxed half-a-crown a year in the increased price of some article, through the prohibition of free trade, perhaps not above a shilling of this goes to those who profit by the monopoly. But this thirty millions

of shillings, amounting to 1,500,000*l.* per annum, is divided, perhaps, among a few hundred persons, who clearly *perceive* whence their revenue is derived; and who, when such an income is at stake, will combine together, and use every effort, and artifice, to keep up the monopoly. The losers, on the other hand, the people, not only have, each, much less at stake, but are, usually, ignorant that they do lose by this monopoly; else they would not readily submit to pay half-a-crown, or even one shilling, as a direct *pension* to a few hundred men who had no claim on them.

Such was the effect, but in a much more aggravated degree, of our system of corn-laws, and other prohibitory, or restrictive laws, on articles of food, or other daily necessities; some of the worst of which are now repealed, but too many of which still remain. Of these last are the Customs, and Excise, laws, the effect of which is, as already shown, to take at least half-a-crown out of the pocket of every housekeeper in this kingdom, for the purpose of putting one shilling into the Exchequer of the State; to say nothing of the less clearly ascertainable, but, probably, still larger sum thereby, at the same time, prevented from fairly coming into the pocket of every housekeeper so wronged.

All these, and a multitude of other cases, come under the general formula before stated; the tendency to overrate the amount of whatever is seen and known, as compared with what is unknown, or less known, unseen, and indefinite.

It is inconceivable, that, if the people understood this, they would so patiently submit to it. The people feel sorely, but do not see, the heavy burden which they are bearing. These are the effects of the "*indirect* taxes which have been the greatest favourites both of princes and subjects," and "for this reason governments have generally had recourse to those that are indirect," because "this ingenious plan conceals the

amount of taxation, and makes its payment appear in some measure voluntary!"

It was a saying of one of the wisest statesmen of America, the late Daniel Webster, one who knew the people of that country, and who, amongst his high gifts, possessed, in an eminent degree, that valuable faculty of discovering the true character of those amongst whom he lived, speaking of the American people, that "In the worst of times, and the darkest hour, he had faith in the redeeming qualities of the people. They might be wrong, but he saw into their true character sufficiently to believe that they would never remain permanently in error."

If such were the opinion of one so competent to judge correctly of the American people, it may not be thought too much to assume the same of the British people; and, in that view, it will not be assuming too much to say, that they may be safely trusted with the means of forming for themselves a full and correct knowledge of their own affairs.

The best way to make people trustworthy, is to be true and open in all dealings with them; to let them know what they are fairly entitled to, and to give it freely to them. There is a reason in every sane human mind, as true as any instinct in the lower animals, which declares against concealment, or disguise, for the purpose of withholding any natural, or just right; and reason tells, with instinctive truth, that every labourer should be free to enjoy the fruits of his labour. "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn," was one of the earliest commands of the Divine Lawgiver to agriculturists. And if the ox were thus cared for, can it be supposed that the human labourer was less cared for? But how have the agriculturists of this country obeyed the spirit of this command? Have they not, as long as they could, prevented the labourer, who sowed and reaped, from eating the corn? Have they not

“ground the faces of the poor?” Have they not “oppressed the poor to increase their riches?”

But what is to be expected from all this? but as it is written: “Forasmuch therefore as your treading is upon the poor, and ye take from him burdens of wheat: ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them: ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink wine of them.”

But the work of reparation has begun, and there is much to be hoped for from the fact, if from no higher motive, that every change which has been made for the benefit of the poor, has been proved to be no less for the benefit of the rich.

But much yet remains to be done, and first by the removal of the manifold mischiefs of taxation by the present system of revenue laws—a system begun in defiance of all reason, and persevered in in defiance of all experience—a system which does, indeed, “grind the faces of the poor,” and spread guilt and wretchedness over the land. The full extent of the desolating effects of this system can never be known until it has given place to wiser laws, and until time, under their genial influence, has obliterated the deep marks left by long injustice and oppression; but, perhaps, this may be, in some degree, shown in the following true picture lately presented to the public by the Liverpool Finance Reformers.

“Less than forty years ago, there were in the East a few scattered huts on the water side, whose inhabitants were half fishermen, and whole pirates. This wretched village is now the flourishing port of Singapore, which enjoys a trade of ten millions annually, and contributes largely to the Indian revenue. What is the secret of this wonderful metamorphosis? Simply the fact, that at Singapore there are no import or export duties; no taxes upon shipping. Who can calculate the immense development of the national re-

sources which would certainly be produced if the same sound principles were extended to British industry, commerce, and manufactures? Nobody can make such a calculation beforehand; but everybody who thinks, must see that the demonstration can only be brought about by means of direct taxation."

If the British Isles be not less favourably situated than the island of Singapore, for industry, commerce, and manufactures, this picture of a reality is worth looking at, and reflecting on.

Appended to this picture are the following sound remarks, here given in the same writer's own forcible language:—

"It is, in fact, almost impossible to exaggerate the injustice inherent in, and the evils inevitably resulting from, our present system of judicial taxation, which may be thus epitomised;—improvidence—fraud—political corruption—perjury—adulteration—restriction of trade and industry—contempt of revenue legislation, which soon leads to contempt of all other laws,—smuggling—bloodshed—murder—and, in short, almost every kind of villany. On the other hand, it is equally impossible to exaggerate the benefits which would flow from the abolition of that system. We believe that, with perfectly untrammelled commerce this country would soon become the European *dépôt* for the produce of the whole world, thus attaining a degree of greatness and prosperity such as has never yet been seen on earth; and that, with all mankind for our customers and friends, and our example spreading daily throughout the nations, the bare idea of war would soon be scouted by the common sense, and common interests, of the whole family of man. Talk of diplomacy,—of treaties of peace and alliance! The best of all diplomatists—the most permanent of pacificators—will be perfect freedom of trade. . . . Justice being thus made the basis of all taxation; and wise economy,

accompanied by honest and intelligible accounts, the rule of Government; we should expect soon to see such an improvement in the tone of public morality that, to cheat the State, now too generally regarded as the merest peccadillo in the world, will be looked upon pretty much in the same light as the picking of pockets, or robbing on the highway. Thus, the patriot, the moralist, the philanthropist, the lover of peace, the friend of progress, and the taxpayer himself, have all the strongest motives for seeking, and the most direct interest in bringing about, that entire revision of our fiscal system which we recommend."

Now, if the effects of free trade have been to convert, in so short a time, the remote and obscure harbour and fishing village, of Singapore, into a great and flourishing city, and port of trade, and commerce, it seems only a reasonable inference to expect, at least, as favourable results, from the same measure, if carried out in the long established, and already great cities, towns, and ports of this country. And, when it is considered how very limited is the extent of land in this country, in reference to its population, and how rapidly the population is increasing, and how large a proportion of the produce of the land, and labour, is necessarily abstracted, by the unavoidably heavy taxation, it will seem scarcely possible to exaggerate the importance of measures for extending the trade, and manufactures, of this country, to place it in a state of progressive improvement for sustaining these already great, and inevitably increasing, demands upon its resources.

It is impossible, in the existing state of things, that profits should be otherwise than low, or that the average, and ordinary, rate of wages should be such as to afford the labouring classes the means of commanding a fair supply of the necessities and conveniences of life. The increase of taxation may have been unavoidable;

but, however urgent the necessity for its increase, and however much it may have stimulated industry, and skill, it has become a heavy burden on the productive capacities of the nation, and must, in the end, occasion the most serious results, if unattended with corresponding increase in the profits from trade, and manufactures, nor is it possible to calculate the extent of misery, and vice, which must ensue from their decline.

These tremendous evils, which are clearly to be foreseen, can only be averted by reducing the weight of taxation, and relieving the pressure on the national resources. It is hopeless to expect that this can be done by means of reductions in the public expenditure. Some saving may, and ought to, be effected in all the departments of the State; but so long as adequate provision is made for the security, and good government, of all the different parts of this extensive empire, there is no reasonable ground for supposing that, the public expenditure can be very sensibly reduced by any such retrenchments. But the utmost saving from such retrenchments would be insignificant, and scarcely worthy of notice, in comparison with the saving which would be effected by the abandonment of the present system of taxation here exposed, with all its cumbrous, and expensive, machinery; and the adoption of the simple, and inexpensive, system of *direct* taxation here proposed. And this is the more necessary, because the probability is, that the expenditure, under the present system, will be increased, with the increase of population. At all events, it is nothing but a delusion, to look to saving from expense, as any resource against the internal evils with which this country is threatened.

But if the great, and yet scarcely known, resources of this country be set free, and if the people be freely permitted to make them available to their fullest extent, though Government may not be able directly to reduce

their burdens, the effect will be the same, by increasing their ability to bear them. And can any one doubt, that the productive capacities of this country would be immensely augmented, and the pressure on the industrious classes very materially diminished, by striking off the remaining shackles which still fetter the freedom of commerce, and by allowing them to purchase, and to bring home, the necessaries and comforts of life, at the lowest cost, from all the markets of the world?

That with the progress of this nation in greatness of power, and wealth of capital, the labouring part of the population has not kept pace; but, on the contrary, has deteriorated, and is deteriorating; is a fact which many may not like to admit, but which, nevertheless, cannot be denied; or which, if denied, can be but too clearly proved: and that, for the last thirty years, misery and vice have gone on together visibly increasing, in proportion with the rapid increase of population, especially amongst the labouring classes, and are still increasing, even far beyond the proportion, is a fact equally clear, and to be proved, if any faith is to be placed in the Parliamentary, and statistical, documents of the country: and it is but too certain that their comforts, and enjoyments, have not been increased in anything like the same proportion, as those of the classes above them; but, on the contrary, have diminished very far below them.

Now, inasmuch as the labouring poor constitute the majority of the population, their spiritual and temporal condition is of the utmost importance, not only in regard to their own well-being, but also in regard to that of the other classes which altogether constitute the nation. The poverty and depressed condition of any very large class, especially if it be contrasted with vast wealth, extravagance and luxury, on the part of others, is a most undesirable state of things, and can hardly fail to produce discontent, sedition, and disturbances of all

kinds. Lord Bacon has said that, "of all rebellions those of the belly are the worst." And he has added,— "The first remedy, or prevention, is to remove, by all means possible, that material cause of sedition of which we speak, which is want, or poverty in the estate."

It is a true remark, "that men will better submit to an undistinguishing despotism, that bears down all classes alike, than to an invidious distinction drawn between privileged, and subject classes." All history proves, that men, long debarred from civil rights, almost always become ill fitted to enjoy them.

The brutalising effects of oppression, which cannot immediately be done away by its removal, at once furnish a pretext for justifying it, and make relief hazardous. Kind and liberal treatment, if cautiously, and judiciously bestowed, will *gradually*, and slowly, advance men towards the condition of being worthy of such treatment; but treat men as aliens, or enemies,—as slaves, as children, or as brutes,—and they will *speedily*, and completely, justify your conduct.

But though the same disastrous consequences may be expected to follow from neglect of the temporal, and spiritual, wants of a people, yet the neglect of both these wants does not work in the same way. The more is done to provide for the spiritual wants of the people, the more likely they will be to make such provision for themselves; and the more they are neglected, the less likely are they to do it. It is, as remarked by Archbishop Whately, the peculiar nature of the inestimable treasure of Christian truth, and religious knowledge, that the more it is withheld from people, the less they wish for it; and the more it is bestowed upon them, the more they hunger, and thirst after it. If people be kept upon a short allowance of food, they are eager to obtain it; if you keep a man thirsty, he will become more and more thirsty; if he be poor, he is exceedingly

anxious to become rich ; but if he be left in a state of spiritual destitution, after a time he will, and still more his children, cease to feel it, and cease to care about it. It is the last want men can be trusted (in the first instance) to supply for themselves. But it is one which admits of no substitute, and unless this be provided for, all other wants supplied will be inefficient for securing temporal welfare, for individuals, or a nation.

No one can doubt, that it is the bounden duty of the Legislature to adopt every safe, and practicable measure for providing for the spiritual, and temporal, wants of the people, and for eradicating, or counteracting, as far as possible, the causes of poverty and vice among the mass of the people, and for increasing, as far as possible, their comforts, and enjoyments.

Now, of these causes, none seem to be more prolific of guilt and wretchedness, than the present mischievous, and oppressive, system of taxation. And, if it be here shown how the condition of the labouring classes might be improved, without injury to the rights, or interests of any other class, then it is also shown how the institutions of this country may be strengthened, and perpetuated.

To trade, the labouring classes must ever look, mainly, for employment, in this country of excessive, and rapidly increasing, population, in proportion to its fixed, and narrow, limits of land. And, though trade does not produce capital, yet it produces the means of profitable employment for labour, and the accumulated savings from the produce of that labour increases the capital of the nation.

But as all labour is a continued effort, opposed to the natural disposition for ease, never pursued for pleasure, and always more or less attended with pain ; to make the reward for labour an adequate compensation for the pain, and to secure to the labourers a sufficient

share of the produce of their labour to purchase for themselves the necessaries, and, as far as can be, the luxuries, and comforts, of civilised life, is no less the sound policy, than the just duty, of every government.

This principle is happily, and amusingly recognised by the discerning mind of Dr. Johnson, in a conversation between him and Boswell, who has thus recorded it:—

Talking of trade, Johnson observed: “It is a mistaken notion that a vast deal of money is brought into a nation by trade. It is not so. Commodities come from commodities; but trade produces no capital accession of wealth. However, though there should be little profit in money, there is a considerable profit in pleasure, as it gives to one nation the productions of another; as we have wines, and fruits, and many other articles brought to us.”

Boswell. “Yes, sir; and there is a profit in pleasure, by its furnishing occupation to such numbers of mankind.”

Johnson. “Why, sir, you cannot call that pleasure to which we are all averse, and which none begin, but with the hope of leaving off; a thing which men dislike before they have tried it, and when they have tried it.”

Boswell. “But, sir, the mind must be employed; and we grow weary when idle.”

Johnson. “That is, sir, because others being busy, we want company; but if we were all idle, there would be no growing weary; we should all entertain one another. There is, indeed, this in trade:—It gives men an opportunity of improving their situation. If there were no trade, many who are poor, would always remain poor. But no man loves labour for itself.”

Boswell. “Yes, sir, I know a person who does. He is a very laborious judge, and he loves the labour.”

Johnson. “Sir, that is because he loves respect and

distinction. Could he have them without labour, he would like it less."

Boswell. "He tells me he likes it for itself."

Johnson. "Why sir, he fancies so, because he is not accustomed to abstract."

Few are accustomed to abstract, or even to think for themselves; and, as Coleridge says, "They only think, who reflect." And, unfortunately for the progress of improvement in the moral or physical condition of mankind, the few who do think, are apt to think more for themselves than for others; and many of the most serious affairs of life, like the light and trivial pursuits of pleasure, are left to the chance guidance of fancies, rather than directed by principles, derived from experience, or careful deductions from abstract reasoning.

But the hard penalty for such proceedings must be paid. And wise and merciful is that appointment; for, without it, nations, and people, would never mend their ways. Nor can their ways ever be mended, without raising their social position. The remedy—the only remedy—is moral, not legislative. Good, honest laws, which distribute equal justice to all classes, is essential for a good social position; but something more is required, and that is—intellectual improvement, by good teaching; that is the remedy, and the only effective remedy. And, though a prosperous and happy state of circumstances is conducive to that end, still the real remedy for a good social position is the same, and ever must be the same, in moral and intellectual improvement. Vain and idle are all the attempts to abate the vice of drunkenness, by prohibitory, or restrictive, laws. The nuisance is not abated, but only diverted into other channels, to be accompanied with other evils, such as smuggling, and all its terrible attendants. All such attempts must fail, like the celebrated Maine Liquor Law, already a dead letter. Reformation must proceed from

the will. Laws may control it, but cannot direct it. A new direction can only be given by a new spirit, in an improved mind. Prohibitory, or restrictive, laws are found, from experience, not to produce any such improvement; and voluntary pledges are rarely found to have anything more than a temporary effect. And even that effect, when produced, is by awakening a new spirit, which is the moral and mental improvement. In that way, little has been done, or attempted, in this country. The intellectual education of the poor is talked of. Can the poor, as they are now situated, be taught much? What ideas does the poor child get in a common school? As Dr. Channing has said:—"The true school of human nature is the sphere opened to its faculties and affections in our conditions in daily life. A state of society furnishing to all its members a field of action for the mind and heart, gives the only true education; and is this to be looked for anywhere in outward institutions? Is it not to be found chiefly in the spirit of Christianity spread through a community, leading its members to a love and reverence of human nature, and to a regard to human excellence in their arrangements for property, &c.? A spirit of self-sacrifice for common good must be made powerful in the most intelligent and influential. To improve men must be a chief consideration in employing them, and the good of the labourer must be regarded, as well as the profit to be drawn from his toil. So long as this is thought romantic, society can have no bright prospect of permanent progress.

"A society is advanced in proportion as human nature is respected. It is the misery of the present state that man, *as man*, is counted of so little worth. It is man clothed in purple, dressed in a little brief authority, high-born, rich, &c., who is now considered as deserving power. A just estimate of human nature, of its pur-

poses, powers, destiny, leading to general courtesy, respect, and effort for the advancement of this nature, in each and all — this is the measure of the progress of society. The existence of a large class, cut off from the rest of the community, trained up to ignorance and vice, gross in manners, and in no other degree acted upon by other classes, and repressed only by brute force, is a sad feature of civilised society. The true organisation of society is that in which all improvements of the higher are communicated to the lower classes, and in which intellect and virtue descend, and are diffused. And will anything but Christianity, moulding anew the whole spirit of the higher classes, bring about this end? There must be a body of enlightened studious men. Let not these form a party, a faction, but consider their light as a good given to be diffused, and as a means to maintain an improving intercourse among all orders. So there will be rich men; but the rich, instead of herding together, and linking themselves to one another by common pleasures, privileges, refinements, ought to regard prosperity *as a trust* for the good of those who are in want. Let there be no literary *class*, no *class* of rich. The learned, when forming a distinct class, become jealous, exacting, domineering, and seek to maintain their sway, even at the expense of truth.

“Scholars already begin to find the benefit of quitting their pedantic cells, and mingling with general society; but still they associate too much with the rich and refined; still they seek honour and power. Their high honour of being lights to society is overlooked. How the rich injure themselves by a clannish spirit, corrupting one another by rivalry in show and expense! Christianity breaks down all these walls of division between man and man.”

Such were the opinions of the late Dr. Channing,

whom Coleridge described as a philosopher, who had the love of wisdom, and the wisdom of love.

What has ever been done to uplift the physical, or improve the moral condition of the labouring classes in this country?

Who can read the reports on the state of the poor in our great cities and towns, or in the rural districts, and believe that "the rich regard prosperity as a trust for the good of those who are in want?" Here is the absence of all that organisation of society in which the improvements of the higher are communicated to the lower classes, and in which intellect and virtue descend, and are diffused. The rich link themselves to one another by common pleasures, privileges, refinements; and, regardless of *their trust*, they leave the despised and neglected class to herd together like brutes, in brutal ignorance and filth; destitute not only of the necessities of life, but also of the means of observing even the ordinary decencies of civilised life. [See the last Report (1857) of Dr. Letheby, the Medical Officer of Health to the City of London, on the state of the poor in the City of London.]

The condition of the lower classes in this country has—by long neglect of mental improvement, by the natural increase of population, beyond the means of profitable employment, by the consequent decrease in the rate of wages, and by the heavy taxes on all the necessities and comforts of life—sunk so low that, to large masses of the people in cities, towns, and country, the term "social condition" can hardly be applied with more propriety than to brute animals. But the education of the poor is still talked of; the improvement of their condition is talked of—as sanitary reforms are talked of—but nothing is done. And what can be done for a people already degraded and destitute? What can be expected from preaching or teaching to

people destitute of all necessary food and clothing, and who are congregated together in masses of human misery and vice, breathing an atmosphere of the foulest impurity, or dotted about like isolated human beings, separated by their very misery and destitution from their more fortunate fellow-creatures, who avoid them as outcasts, or, like heaven-stricken lepers of old, whose near approach was contamination ?

It is not by ragged schools, or penny tracts, that the poor are to be lifted up into anything like a "social position." These are good aids to a good system, but a good working system can never be established whilst two-thirds of the revenue are raised by taxes on the necessaries and comforts of life, which must always press with the greatest severity upon the poor, and working classes. Religious tracts, and moral tales, however plentifully distributed amongst the poor, will avail little or nothing for their improvement, morally, or intellectually, as long as there is no fire to make the pot boil, and nothing to put into the pot when it does boil. As Sidney Smith has said, in his own incomparable style, — "The moral story for the poor generally is, that a labourer with six children has nothing to live upon but mouldy bread, and dirty water; yet nothing can exceed his cheerfulness, and content—no murmurs, no discontent:—of mutton he has scarcely heard, of bacon he never dreams; farinaceous bread and the water of the pool constitute his food, establish his felicity, and excite his warmest gratitude: the squire, or parson of the parish, always happens to be walking by, and overhears him praying for the king, and the members of the county, and for all in authority; and it generally ends with their offering him a shilling, which this excellent man declares he does not want, and will not accept. These are the tracts which Goodies and Noodles are dispersing with unwearied diligence. It would be

a great blessing if some genius would arise who had a talent of writing for the poor."

Then, as to the sort of teachers and preachers for the poor, the same writer, in his own happy vein of wit and sarcasm, but never heartless and unkind, and always with a sound groundwork of deep and accurate reflection, adds : — " All mines and subterraneous places belong to the Methodists; they creep into hospitals and small schools, and so work their way upwards. It is the custom of the religious neutrals to buy all the little livings, particularly in the North of England, and from these fixed points they make incursions upon the happiness and common sense of the vicinage. We are quite sure that happiness will be destroyed, reason degraded, sound religion banished from the world; and that when fanaticism becomes too foolish and too prurient to be endured (as is at last sure to be the case), it will be succeeded by a long period of the grossest immorality, atheism, and debauchery. If you preach up to ploughmen and artisans that every singular feeling which comes across them is a visitation of the Divine Spirit, can there be any difficulty, under the influence, in converting these simple creatures into active and mysterious fools, and making them your slaves for life? It is not possible to raise up any dangerous enthusiasm by telling men to be just, and good, and charitable; but keep this part of Christianity out of sight, and talk long and enthusiastically, before ignorant people, of the mysteries of our religion, and you will not fail to attract a crowd of followers."

Nothing will be done by the minister, till he arouses in men a fervent energy of the moral principle.

Decency, prudence, self-interest, regard to comfort, respectability, though all these are nothing in comparison; yet all these are to be cultivated and encouraged for that high aim, and ultimate great end. Men must

be made to thirst for perfect goodness, to see its eternal beauty, to long for it with the full force of their spiritual affections. But, *for this* they must be raised up into a certain state of social enjoyment. They must be lifted out of the misery of dejection, and a state of servile dependence. They must be made aware of their natural independence, by the free exercise of their natural powers; and, as they exert these, so they must be left to the free enjoyment of their just reward. They must be made to feel, that they are members of one brotherhood;—that as such they are cared for;—and they must be treated accordingly. Their hearts will then respond to the claims of God and Christ, in heavenly virtue, when plainly urged. There is an inward spiritual tendency in every human being to moral perfection, which, if not quenched by outward circumstances, insures a joyful acquiescence in the highest appeals. Men may not have been made to see the rudiments of these heavenly capacities in themselves—to feel that they have experienced a peculiar joy in love—that they have gained new life by sacrifices to uprightness. But still the inward tendency exists, waiting only for happier circumstances to be called forth. Unbounded progress in virtue, in love, light, power—all embracing philanthropy—the absorption of selfishness in universal good-will—victory over debasing influences—spiritual liberation from all impulses—the ever near influences of the Holy Spirit—the Divine love manifested in Christ—the almighty design of God to redeem men from all iniquity—the prospect of immortality, of never-ending approach to God, of ever-growing participation in his life, and ever-widening co-operation with his beneficence—these are the great truths which come home with irresistible power to the Divine principle within all men; and on these truths should all human laws be framed,—all human institutions founded.

The evils of life will still continue, but then they will trouble less and less. We see pain and death everywhere. All animated nature suffers and dies. Life begins, and ends, in pain. Then pain has a great work to do. Then there is a vast good before us, to outweigh and annihilate it. Its universality reconciles us to it. We do not ask to be exempted from the common lot. In this, as in all things, we wish to go with our race. We pretend not to explain events, but we do see glorious issues of suffering, and these are enough.

But all ought to be able to say, that they find life a gift increasing in value. Not a cup foaming, and sparkling at the top, and growing vapid as we have drunk. Life is not a little cup dipped from the stream of time. It is itself a *stream*; and though at its birth it may dance, and send forth cheerful murmurs, as it does not afterwards, still it is intended to flow, as it advances, through more beautiful regions, and to adorn its shores with richer verdure, and more abundant harvests. Do not say that this end is frustrated, or if it appear to be so, do not say that it is so by the Divine will. There are multitudes who have not found infancy and youth as happy as later years. Where it has been otherwise, it was never so intended. Our cup runneth over. Life is truly a blessing to us. Could we but see others as happy, what a world this would be! So it might be. So it ought to be. So it must be. So it will be.

But it *is* a good world, notwithstanding the darkness hanging over it. The longer we live, the more we see the light breaking through the clouds. We are sure the sun is above them.

Man, as a *free moral being*, must be tried, must be exposed to temptation, must have a wide range of action, must be liable to much sin, and much suffering. From the essential laws of a free being, he can have no

happiness, but what he wins amidst temptation. A brute may be made as happy as he can be at first. Man, God's free moral child, cannot know happiness, till, by his own striving, he has risen to goodness and sanctity. We do not see how sin, and suffering, can be removed, but by striking out from our nature its chief glories.

But, one of the great excellencies of moral good is, that it aids us to enjoy all other good. The most perfect man is not he who confines himself to purely moral gratifications, but he who has a moral energy through which all things are received, and enjoyed, by him in a wise order, and in just proportions. Other gratifications, thus controlled, become moral.

One of the discouraging symptoms of the day is, that so few persons, except of the clerical profession, make morals, and religion, the subject of investigation, and serious inquiry. To most, religion is a tradition, or a feeling. The noblest subjects of human thought, and those in which all men have an equal interest, are given up to a small body of professional men. The effects of this, making theology a monopoly of a few, are disastrous alike to the many, and the few. Theology has become technical,—a trade, a means of power. It has taken a monastic character, been severed from common life, and thus been turned into an instrument of superstition. The multitude, in their ignorance, have easily fallen under the dominion of fear, and have bowed their understandings to irrational, and degrading doctrines. Men who understand the dignity of moral, and religious, truth seek it as inestimably precious.

We see that no institutions, however good, can be enjoyed without experience of evil. We must take things as they are; but ever try to make them better. A free government, undoubtedly, has its evils. A people, on the whole, are poor rulers; but so are kings

and aristocracies. All governments are, and must be, bad, till men grow wiser and better. The advantage of popular institutions is, that they are founded in natural right; that they educate, and elevate, a people more than any other; and thus, in the long run, that the people will learn their true interest; whilst privileged orders must, from the nature of the case, postpone this interest to their own.

But all people are very unreasonable. If they choose to have a popular government, they are not willing to accept its essential condition; namely, that it shall have the imperfections of the people. An absolute sovereign may get in advance of his people, but a people cannot get in advance of itself, and it must govern according to its own character. If, instead of croaking, they would try to improve themselves, they would show a little comprehension of their situation.

But, after all, much will still remain to be done;—much, indeed, for Christianity to achieve, and to conquer, before it will accomplish its office of inspiring in all men universal love, which is universal justice. It has to break down, not the aristocracy of birth, or the aristocracy of wealth, but the pride of both; the sectarianism, and bigotry, of the religious world; the clanish spirit of nations; and many other barriers of pride, and selfishness. But it is equal to its work. It is silently, but steadily, teaching men to recognise their nature, and the great purpose of their being,—proving to them that there is no glory, but in self-conquest, and in a wide charity,—pleading the cause of the poor, the ignorant, and the stranger,—infusing a candour which sees, with joy, the virtues of other parties, other sects, other countries; and gradually generating in the individual the consciousness that he is made for his race, for God, and for the universe. This spirit is too god-like to be gained and perfected in a moment, or a century,

or, even during man's existence in this world. It is enough that we see in men the dawning, and promise, of this universal love.

Some of these latter remarks, with slight alterations, are taken from the writings of Dr. Channing; and a saying of his, in a conversation with our poet, Wordsworth, is recorded by him to this effect:—"That one great evidence of the Divine origin of Christianity is, that it contains nothing which renders it unadapted to a progressive state of society,—that it puts no checks upon the activity of the human mind, and does not compel it to tread always blindly in a beaten path." He might have added:—"That Christianity, whose holy books are written in two languages which are strange to most times, and places, and which embrace so many subjects for inquiry, contains innumerable demands for reflection and cultivation:—That a great portion of the Christian world have obeyed these demands; and that in spite of many errors, which, by the condition of humanity, necessarily creep in, it has yet thereby reached a far higher degree of enlightenment, than those barbarous nations which remain in their own gross conceptions:—That man is far too strongly inclined to view the material world as actual true existence, but that Christianity raises him above the impressions of his senses; aims at the highest possible improvement of the human race; and desires one kingdom of God upon earth, one Shepherd, and one fold." It desires to guide man to the attainment of this aim. But man is full of passions, and desires, which lead him wrong: if his understanding be darkened, it cannot bring him back into the right path. It is certainly true, that the precepts of Christ are so comprehensible that a child may understand them, and whoever accepts them in honest faith, and honest self-devotion, and makes them the essence of his life, is immediately elevated above the cloud which obscures the

sight of most men. But experience shows us that man is so blind to the good, that few will sacrifice the gratification of low, earthly passions, either for the inexhaustible love of Christ, or for the heavenly crown which shines at the end of our course. Christianity teaches us to regard earthly goods as small and contemptible, in comparison with heavenly. No one will venture to deny this truth, and even the uncultivated man is not wholly beyond its influence; but from the daily habit of seeing nothing but what most nearly surrounds him, the forcible impression of it is with him extinguished. Enlightenment also extends his view over earthly things, and accustoms him to perceive the insignificance and unimportance of what surrounds him in comparison with the events of this world. It no longer requires such a great mental leap to regard these also as nothing, in comparison with divine things. How much stronger must this feeling be with him whom a still greater progress has brought to that point, that he can behold with distinctness the infinite perishableness of the whole material world, in which nothing is eternal except Reason, and the creative power revealed in it! Christ is our great Master, but He will not compel us; He desires that, led by His Spirit, we should ourselves develop our powers. That kingdom of God which ought to reign upon earth, is a living acknowledgment of the will of God, that is, of Divine Reason; of which our human reason is an image, although only an infinitely feeble one. Enlightenment is essentially requisite for this; not as a foreign aid which comes to Christianity from without, but as a development of the capacities of men, which is promoted, and urged forward, by Christianity itself, and by that government of God which is revealed in the distribution of Christianity. The conception of the universe is incomplete, if not comprehended as a constant, and continuous, work of the eter-

nally creating Spirit. The creative portion of this conception is the Spiritual; the Material is the produce of the creative, and would cease, if it were possible for the work of production to cease. As a product of nature, the Spiritual in Man must, in this sense, contain the laws of Nature, although they are only brought into consciousness by natural phenomena; while surrounding nature, without human aid, must operate in accordance with man's faculty of understanding,—although this understanding faculty may, in general, only after several thousand years, attain an insight into the pervading harmony of existence.

It is easy to perceive, that the grounds which lead us to this conviction are also everywhere valid. Throughout the universe, there are beings endowed with the faculty of understanding, that they may be able to catch some sparks of the Divine light; and God reveals Himself to these beings through the surrounding universe, and rouses their slumbering reason, by that Reason which reigns through the sensible world; nay, He gives them a deeper insight into material existence, the more their own minds are awakened; and thus they find themselves placed in a ceaseless and living development, which, after having reached a certain point, removes them farther and farther from the idea, that the foundation of Being is that which is palpable, and which leads them to acknowledge and view themselves, their spirits and bodies, as parts of one eternal organism of Reason. Thus do the truths of Natural Science continually approach nearer to those of Christianity, so that, at last, both must be united in the most intimate connection. Man, even when he is led away by his passions, and forgets his reasonable nature, cannot entirely dissipate the influence which the reasonable connection of the world must have on him; the evil that he does, and even the evil that he thinks, brings him in opposition with his own nature,

and with the whole of existence, however much he may endeavour to hide it from himself. Whatever is sin, in a religious sense, is folly in a true perception of the world. He, then, who is thoroughly convinced of an eternal reason in existence, will find that happiness is one with virtue and piety. It is true, that it is often very difficult to be practically convinced of this truth, in the face of strong opposing impressions which we meet at every turn, so that the better persuasion is often forced to submit; but this weakness of the human race cannot prevent us seeing, in that conviction, a powerful support to virtue. It is not merely our lives that must be regulated by this eternal reason, but all our inner reason must yield to it, and rise along with it; man must feel that he possesses his true spring of life, when he appropriates to himself eternal reason; otherwise, his whole life remains but a broken, irrational, miserable existence. Everything which appeals to our virtuous and upright feelings, naturally leads us to a divine life, that is, to religion. This manner of thinking is at once strengthened by the conviction which arises from the knowledge of natural science. This teaches us that the material world, which before we considered as acting in opposition to reasonable existence, is entirely incorporated into it; so that the operations of nature proceed in obedience to a reason which is entirely independent of us, but which, nevertheless, is the same reason which we should endeavour, by means of our free will, to realise. We thus know that our life, both inwardly, and outwardly, continually grows in more perfect accordance with the whole of existence, the more it is guided by Divine reason.

It is proved by science, that the laws by which our earth and all its inhabitants are guided, are also adapted to other planets; that the whole is under the dominion, and government, of one universal reason. Thus, it may

be distinctly seen, that unity of essence does not exclude the greatest variety in the forms of existence ; that the laws of nature hold good throughout the universe. This universality has been assumed by all who have entered on physical researches, and assuredly with justice ; for in the connection, and results, of their discoveries, this is sufficiently proved.

Now, if we turn our attention to the laws of motion, we easily convince ourselves that these primary laws are such as are required by our power of understanding, so far as it rightly comprehends itself ; on the other hand, that these laws, independently of us, are obeyed by nature. We know that the straight line is the simplest ; we see this at once when we consider it in a mental point of view ; as whether we imagine a straight line in our minds, or describe it visibly to our senses, it is always associated with one uniform, unalterable, idea. This is the more clearly developed, and proved, by mathematics. Let us now further consider that a simple force must produce a simple motion, and we then perceive that this must necessarily be the first law of motion, namely, that every simple impulse must produce a rectilinear motion ; and, behold, nature has constantly obeyed this law, long before man discovered it. It is a necessary law of reason, that what is without will is incapable, in itself, of determining upon any change ; and, therefore, that no motion can either be accelerated, or diminished, or even change its direction, without the intervention of new effects ; in other words, that every simple motion must have a uniform velocity, and be in one direction. This is so manifest to the reason, that we can scarcely believe, it is only during the last century that it has been clearly developed. But, in pursuance of this law, there is a further consequence, namely, that each constantly operating force every moment receives a fresh impulse

of motion, equal to that imparted at the beginning, and that the velocity thus produced must increase uniformly, so that the velocity acquired at any time, must stand in proportion to the time elapsed since the first moment. This simple truth, viewed on mathematical principles, led to the discovery of many laws which were hitherto concealed from experience; but which, now that inquiry has been started, readily yielded to its researches.

By the application of these truths, we arrived at the knowledge that every curvilinear motion is the result of compound forces, and not of simple ones. That all active forces, which diverge from one point, operate in planes which have a given relation to the squares of the distances; that their power, therefore, must stand in every point in an *inverse* proportion to these squares; is a very simple demand of reason, but has been only recently acknowledged.

If we cannot prove satisfactorily to our minds that universal attraction is a law of reason, it, nevertheless, is a fact whose incontrovertible truth must be acknowledged by reason, and which has received a far higher application, from the operation of the law of the inverted squares of distances. By the further application of all this knowledge, the laws of central motion were discovered; and in reference to those movements by which all bodies, in conformity with the laws of universal attraction, are urged towards a central point, it has been proved, that the paths described must be of the form known by the name of conic sections; thus we are convinced when, by experience, an orbit is discovered, that it must be produced by a force which follows this same law.

All these researches, therefore, prove that the movements of the planets are governed by the same laws as those of a projected body on the surface of our globe:

and this great scientific fact may be assumed, as generally acknowledged, namely, that those laws which have been discovered by the efforts of the mind when matured by experience, are valid for all the movements of the heavenly bodies; thus showing that the universal validity of these laws, recognised by reason, also compels us to adopt the idea of the essential similarity of the understanding faculty throughout the universe.

This universality by no means excludes great differences; thus, for example, we may calculate that the weight or gravity on the surface of Jupiter is two and a half times greater than it is on our earth; that the rapidity of descent in falling bodies, in various parts of that planet, presents greater inequalities than it does with us; and that its density is far less than that of our globe. But all these differences have been produced by the same laws.

It is a well known law, that fire produces heat; but if we put water in a red-hot crucible which contains liquid sulphuric acid, it will be changed into ice. To those who are not versed in science, this appears an extraordinary exception to the law. But the scientific man may note it down as a triumph. He knows that actions here take place which obey different laws. The one is the communication of heat, by which water receives a higher degree of heat; the second is evaporation, which produces cold. Liquid sulphuric acid evaporates with a greater rapidity than most bodies, and produces such intense cold, that the water not only loses all the heat which it receives out of the hot crucible, but a great deal more; and thence arises the effect so astonishing to the imagination, that water becomes ice in the midst of fire.

All nature proves that there exist everywhere the same materials, the same forces, and the same laws; that these laws are founded on reason, and, con-

sequently, can only be acknowledged by reasonable beings. In other words, the conception of the universe is incomplete, if not comprehended as a constant, and continuous, work of the eternally creating Spirit. The creative portion of this conception is the spiritual; the material is the produce of the creative, and would cease if it were possible for the work of production to cease. As a product of Nature, the spiritual in man must, in this sense, contain the laws of Nature, although they are only brought into consciousness by natural phenomena; while surrounding nature, without human aid, must operate in accordance with man's faculty of understanding, although this understanding faculty may, in general, only after several thousand years, attain an insight into the pervading harmony of existence. It is easy to perceive that the grounds which lead us to this conviction are also everywhere valid. Throughout the universe there are beings endowed with the faculty of understanding, that they may be able to catch some sparks of the Divine light; and God reveals Himself to these beings through the surrounding universe, and rouses their slumbering reason, by that reason which reigns through the sensible world, giving them a deeper insight into material existence, the more their minds are awakened; and thus they find themselves placed in a ceaseless, and living, development, which, after having reached a certain point, removes them farther and farther from the idea that the foundation of Being is that which is palpable, and which leads them to acknowledge, and view themselves, their spirits, and bodies, as parts of one eternal organism of Reason.

Thus do the truths of natural science continually approach nearer those of Religion, so that, at last, both must be united in the most intimate connection.

As the same fundamental forces and laws prevail in other planets, as in our own, it is perfectly consistent

with reason to suppose, that the living beings of other planets are produced by the same forces, and laws, as those on our globe; that they are endowed with a thinking faculty of the same nature as ours, though, probably, very different in power, and clearness; that they must possess sensational faculties, by means of which they are enabled to apprehend material effects, and that, not only have these faculties organs of external sense, but also an inward capability to receive and preserve those impressions which have come through the senses—in short, an inner sense. Added to this, that there is the power to apprehend those impressions which, by the vibration of external bodies, are produced on the frame of the self-conscious being, and also the power to obtain knowledge of the outer world by the vibrations of the æther.

Thus, the contemplation of nature, when founded on reasonable grounds, proves that all existence is an everlasting, perpetual, active work of the eternal and living Reason, which, when viewed in his self-consciousness and personality, we name God. We must, therefore, distinctly remember that, the human race is a part of this whole, and that every single human being, as one of the race, becomes a part of the great unity of existence; in order that we may place ourselves upon that point of view from which the ideas and feelings relating to right, duty, virtue, piety, and all that is connected with them, appear in harmony with the rest of nature. As society advanced in the world, men combined for mutual help and defence. At this point the idea was called forth, of a certain law, and order, necessary to their confederation, whose maintenance was requisite for the common benefit. In the progress of that confederation this consciousness is still further developed; the thought of virtue, and duty, becomes more and more apparent. Let it never be forgotten that all these external, and

internal, causes are the operations of the same eternal, and living, Reason by which all is created and sustained ; and that this development obeys the almighty and omnipresent Divine Will.

We should have a false conception of the development of the human race, if we thought that all men equally contribute to it. There have been some highly gifted men to whom these ideas first became clear, and who thus were able to express them to the multitude. Such men are, generally, far advanced beyond the rest in many other respects ; and they have, in general, a deep conviction that what they know and impart to others is far from being exclusively the result of their own labours, for their minds have been wakened from without, by those natural objects which they have observed, and on which they have reflected ; and even their inner mental capacity, by which they have worked out these external impressions, they must regard as a gift of nature, or Divine Reason. In this simple faith there, indeed, exists a truth which has been often overlooked ; it is the divine agency, and government, in man, and nature, which has obtained a living, though not, perhaps, a clearly defined, consciousness in their minds. The human race continues in this way to develop its moral conceptions, as well as its knowledge of nature, from century to century, and from thousands to thousands of years, and these ideas, and this knowledge, are unfolded, in obedience to necessary laws of existence, by the reasonable works of nature, namely, by the human race in constant reciprocation with nature, and with each other.

In this point of view, how strong is the duty, as well as the inducement, in every human being to contribute to the utmost of his gifts to this development ; and if not by new discoveries, which are permitted only to a few, at least by his own example, which is the privilege of all ! And how serious is the responsibility, how

great the sin, in those who are permitted to be rulers, and governors, over multitudes, and who, instead of contributing to this development to the utmost of their power, use all their powers to retard it, for their own more narrow views, or base and selfish purposes ; or, who fail to use the powers entrusted to them, in accordance with the universal laws of Heaven, and the Divine Will !

That the human race develops itself according to the laws of Reason, and will so continue to develop itself, notwithstanding all impediments, we may clearly see ; and we may also perceive that this development is advanced by the successive changes produced by death ; and that death must continue to work these changes, until the development is complete and perfect ; when death, we know, by the immutable law revealed to us, will cease for ever, and with it sin. The hastening of that glorious event may, therefore, be within the reach of human power, acting in unison with eternal reason ; for, although the time be known to the Eternal Will, yet that Will, ever acting by the same eternal and unceasing laws, as seen in the unvarying laws of nature, is a continuous operation of Divine Reason, which never alters ; and this eternal similarity with itself to the laws of nature, may, in like manner, be submitted to our reflection.

In the meantime, for the ever present, it must suffice us to know this important truth, that all which is contrary to reason, will, in the end, be resolved into the eternal activity of reason in existence, and that the harmony of reason must conquer. Objects may exist, which, though they themselves are in conformity with reason, may yet, possibly, during a certain period of time, be opposed to the general order of reason ; and, consequently, must sink that they may again arise at the proper season.

Despotism flourishes only where the mental faculties of the nation are either not sufficiently developed, or

are weakened by false training. In the latter case, despotism may last a long time; but if the people themselves have not sufficient energy to overcome the oppression, foreign powers will accomplish it for them sooner or later.

Looking only on the finite view, it may be said, What does it avail the innumerable beings languishing in dungeons, suffering mentally and bodily, possibly during life, that the misfortunes which oppress them here will be explained in a higher order of things? This objection is an old one, and so is the answer; but the argument is repeated whenever any one endeavours to exhibit the reasonable order of human affairs, and on that account the answer must also be repeated each time, and especially because every time it becomes more obvious.

No system, merely taken from a finite point of view, has yet been discovered, in which evil, whether physical or moral, has been represented as destroyed, and resolved into good: for this we must point to a *duration* of life *beyond* this mortal existence, and our powers of comprehension cannot dispense even with this advantage. The belief in such a *continuous* life is, indeed, only natural to us. Here we only hold fast to the reasonable connection of all things, whether it may flatter, or disappoint, our desires.

We may still farther remember, that all finite existence is infinitely small, in comparison with the whole; and although some of the effects of the abuse and error of free-will may extend through centuries, and even thousands of years, still the proportion remains infinitely small. No one will deny this truth; but it will, perhaps, animate and invigorate our knowledge, if it be explained by an example which is offered to us by our globe. Without going farther back than where we may be guided by facts which have been clearly proved,

we perceive that, our earth must have existed some thousands of years before the creation of any organic beings; that, more thousands of years must have elapsed, during which there was nothing but barren vegetation and soft-bodied animals; that, at a still later period, there was a succession of eras, each commencing at the downfall of the preceding one; every one of these periods made a fresh step in development, till at last man appeared. What is all the time during which man has existed, compared to these immeasurable series of thousands of years? What, again, are the individual epochs in the human race, in comparison with the whole period of its existence, without even including the time which is still to come? And, yet, we have only taken our own globe as an example; the universe exhibits far longer divisions of time.

The development of the human race has been similar to that of the globe, in spite of the usurpations of free will, which have, apparently, but small influence on the course of nature. It is maintained by theologians, on the literal comprehension of some passages in the Bible, that death entered the world with sin; but, however this may be, nature clearly proves the traces of death, destruction, and pain, before the existence of the human race on earth; that long before man came into the world, many great, and destructive, changes had taken place, in which whole species, indeed whole races, of animals perished; that, in those times also, many animals swallowed one another; and, indeed, in the bones of the earliest creatures, distinct marks of disease have been traced, with evidence of death in consequence. Such are the clear proofs that we possess, that suffering, destruction, sickness, and death, are older than the fall of man! At the same time, all researches into the nature of the human body show, that by its original construction it bears the stamp of mortality. If any

part of the Bible appear to contradict this, it may, perhaps, be reconciled by a correct interpretation; but, should the contrary be the case, we must leave such passages as unexplained mysteries, until a higher knowledge be attained.

We must, therefore, conclude, that the human race develops itself according to the laws of reason,—that the series of changes which take place, in spite of many alternations from progressive to retrograde movements, are still an actual development; and that the usurpations of free will, notwithstanding apparently disturbing influences, must obey the eternal order of Reason, and be ever in a state of progression towards perfection. We may add to this, that human reason perpetually develops greater depth of knowledge, and more distinct views, and thus is armed with greater power to avoid mistakes. In short, we may happily rest assured that all those entanglements which befall the human race, and which seem somewhat threatening at the present time, cannot prevent us from perceiving that the race of man more and more approaches the realisation of a kingdom of reason upon earth, though, of course, subject to those limitations which must accompany a finite existence. The mental development to which every inhabitant of earth is subject, is the united effort of his own action, and the influence of the surrounding world, in which his fellow-creatures usually occupy the most essential portion. No single man could have developed all the knowledge, and learning, which the human race, as a whole, has produced; indeed, human life is not long enough to accomplish such a task. The highest degree of mental cultivation which a man can reach, is the capability to penetrate, thoroughly, a limited circle of knowledge, and by aid of the intellectual development thence attained, joined to an eager love of inquiry, to gain a tolerably clear image of the

whole of existence. With respect to much which he is not able to acquire by his own investigations, he must rely on that of the rest of the human race; he must receive the information as a gift from that reason which pervades the whole of existence. It is a light which permits him to perceive that which is concealed in the fathomless depths of his own being. His apprehension and acquirement is, in that case, a faith. This expression must, however, be understood with more or less meaning, and we must only use it in the latter sense, as connected with those truths which relate most intimately to the essential principle of our existence. We cannot draw any defined limits here; for the higher a man has raised himself to a really true, and natural, mental development, so much the more means has he at his disposal to strengthen his belief in truth; he is, indeed, often enabled by this to change that into knowledge which must remain faith in others; and even where he is forced to abide by faith alone, he can raise it to greater distinctness, and power, by confirming himself in the remaining truths which he is conscious of. In all our mental efforts, we must endeavour, if we would not wander from the right path, to preserve our natural love of truth in its entire purity; for our inclinations often tempt us to adopt that which flatters them, for truth. Amidst the temptations which most easily gain ground among those who would be teachers, and guides, of the human race, is the pleasure of saying something extraordinary to our fellow-creatures, something which draws admiration on the speaker.

All the distinct, and simple, truths in man are revelations of Eternal Reason. He, therefore, who discovers and declares them, is, so far, an instrument in the hands of God. Inasmuch as the revealed truth is higher, more comprehensive, and more exalting, it is proportionately supernatural, in comparison with that finite

condition which, at a lower estimate, is exclusively called nature, although it is perfectly natural in the eternal nature of God. One external sign of the exalted nature of this revelation is, the vastness of its operation; vast, let it be observed, not merely by its great extension through the world, but in the amount of the effect which it produces in the human race itself—the improvement, the exaltation, the near approach to God, of which mankind thus becomes conscious.

In this way we may see, that all free beings on earth are intended to form a kingdom of reason; and that this is a natural consequence of the plan of nature now existing, but which yet must be carried to greater perfection, by a continued development. Every free being must receive impressions, some in opposition to the will, and inclinations, and others agreeing with them. The contest with the rebellious will must develop laws of will which do not, indeed, absolutely compel, as the laws of nature, but, at the same time, demand that certain maxims of reason should be realised by independent efforts. We see that mankind are not all created with equal capacities, and that the existence of every individual begins under different conditions of time and space. The most gifted will, therefore, form a ladder for their fellow-creatures, of greater or less compass, according to the capacity of each; and we should ever remember the various stages of development in which we find the human mind, owing to the different conditions of existence on earth.

If we properly appreciate our present distance from the aspirations of our reason, we shall feel compelled to acknowledge, that an endless number of degrees of development may exist above the point we have reached. Yet we must not be depressed with this reflection. Our race is still in its youth on earth, and seems to have a

long futurity in prospect, for higher development, and we may venture to hope, that those who have fulfilled their appointed path on earth, in the season which was allotted them, may yet have an opportunity elsewhere, to rise to a still higher summit.

Many of the foregoing remarks are taken, and adapted, from the writings of that eminent, and far-sighted, Danish philosopher, Oersted, to whom the world is indebted for the first suggestions which led to the electric telegraph; and the following may indicate the mental process which guided him to that wonderful discovery, and encouraged him to indulge in the prospect, that our increasing acquaintance with geology, and the magnetism of this globe, might enable us to form conclusions as to the internal structure of other planets, and to attain to an intellectual communication with other worlds. He thus adds, in conclusion:—

“ We, therefore, hope in this world to be continually gaining more and more knowledge, which will give us a much deeper insight of what happens on distant planets, and, at the same time, will enlarge the sympathies of our spiritual existence with the whole of the universe. If we now imagine that the same thing happens on other planets with regard to us, we must perceive that there is an arrangement in finite existence, by means of which, one part of the universe may comprehend the other by its mental faculties; that, consequently, each essential portion of the universe may recognise the whole; even that every one may possess a knowledge of the knowledge, the faith, and the recognition of a God in other worlds; in short, that the whole of existence is not alone, by origin, and by guidance of the eternal, all-powerful Reason, a kingdom of reason, but that there is a disposition towards a community of reason in the finite thinking being itself, a disposition which, among the inhabitants of the earth, has hitherto only reached a

certain degree of that development which is desired, but which, probably, has already reached far higher perfection, in some other parts of existence. It, therefore, follows, from the nature of things, that we may say, in the most comprehensive meaning of the expression, that the whole of Existence is a Kingdom of Reason."

Of those who deny, or doubt this, we may ask;—Would you that the Creator, for the sake of the wickedness and folly of mankind, should ruin His own works, and disturb the laws appointed to nature by His own wisdom? If a man steal grain, and sow it, should the grain not shoot up out of the earth, because it was stolen? O no! the wise Creator lets nature run her own course; for her course is His own appointment. And what if the children of folly abuse it to evil! The day of reckoning is not far off, and men will then learn that human actions likewise reappear in their consequences, by as certain a law as the green blade rises up out of the buried corn seed.

With our present imperfect powers of mental perception, we have already penetrated far beyond the limits of this material world, and, probably, just so far beyond the knowledge ever attained by a heathen people; for, we may assume that, through all past ages of a heathen state, human knowledge, which was derived only from this material world, never really extended beyond it, though occasional glimpses beyond may have been vouchsafed, to cheer the anxious longings of some few brighter, and more faithful, spirits. And this view is confirmed by all that has been handed down to us of ancient art. We see, in the works of the ancients, the attainment of a state of excellence in all that appertained to art in material things, but all confined within the limits of this material world.

The beautiful in nature was highly appreciated by them; and of this we have the evidence in their ex-

quisite imitations still preserved. But, beyond their imitations of the beautiful in nature, we have no evidence of their knowledge beyond; and all that is handed down to us of their works confirms the impression that their only knowledge of the living God was in the works of nature in this material world. The spirit beyond came not within their knowledge, and to the things of this world, therefore, their knowledge was confined. This experience, from undoubted evidence, might alone be sufficient to indicate that, for our perfect knowledge of the things of this world, and for a knowledge of things beyond, nature alone is insufficient, and that a more intimate communion with the Divine Spirit is essential; and Christianity teaches us that this is to be obtained only by following in the course which has been revealed to us in the Divine doctrines of the Divine Spirit, manifested to us in the human form and flesh in Jesus Christ. By this mysterious union we are brought into immediate and intimate communion with God, and it is in perfect consistence with reason to expect that, through the communion, we shall attain to a knowledge of His Will, in a far higher degree than is yet manifested to us in the laws of nature, which are only the manifestations of His Will to us, in our present imperfect state in this world; and which, probably, produced very different results, from what they now secure to us, when the world was first created, and for ages afterwards. Not that the Almighty Will ever changes, or His laws, called the laws of nature, ever change, according to our notions of change; but that the change in the moral condition of man, from that in which he was first created, may have required a corresponding change in his physical position; and that such may have been effected by a change in the actual position of this material world, whereby the laws of nature, which before worked in uniform order, and in perfect harmony

with the sphere, became out of unison, and deranged the former order and harmony, and introduced a state of conflict, agitation, and disorder, quite inconsistent with the original design, and order of creation, but quite consistent with the natural operation of those laws, and with the altered state, and condition, of the inhabitants of this world.

With respect to the conjecture, that the climate of the whole world underwent great changes after the Deluge, although there be no direct authority to confirm such an opinion, yet there are many evidences to support such a conjecture.

The abbreviation of the natural life of man, after that universal catastrophe, is distinctly recorded by Moses; and it is pretty clearly established, that great physical changes ensued throughout the world. It is recorded in Genesis (ix. 2, 3), after this event, as the declaration of God to Noah, that the fear and dread of man should be "upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea;" and that "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things."

It may, therefore, be inferred that distrust and enmity then first arose between man, and the inferior animal creation, and that previously to that time, the food of mankind, and of all inferior animals, was confined to the vegetable productions of the earth.

To doubt this state of things, which was, and will be again, is to deny the testimony of the Scriptures. The variations in the teeth, and inward conformation, with other facts in the animal structure, which now distinguish the carnivorous, from the graminivorous, animals, can furnish no evidence in contradiction of the sacred record. It is, therefore, quite immaterial for this purpose to inquire how these distinctions arose. The

change of habits in the animals may have produced these changes in the formation; or, more probably, these alterations may have been specially provided, as being better adapted to the altered and fallen nature. This view is treated as an absurdity by many high authorities in science, and amongst others Cuvier; but the higher authority still remains, which has declared that "the lion shall eat straw like the ox."

It is also to be collected from the sacred record, that it was not until long after the deluge that man felt the full and entire effects of the changes successively taking place around him on his gradually altering constitution. The vigour and stability of his health are well known to be dependent on the equality, or inequality, of temperature, and the salubrious, or distempered, state of the atmosphere in which he breathes. The nature of his nourishment, equally affected by that state, constantly supplies the seeds of invigoration, or quick decay. Excesses, no doubt, shorten the lives of many, but these do not limit the general standard of the age of man.

The supposed alterations in the face and climate of the earth seem to furnish the most probable, as the most natural, and perhaps only assignable causes for the slowly and progressively impaired constitution of men, during the course of several ages succeeding the deluge. From the immediate effects of that catastrophe, his general age became reduced, from upwards of 900, to under 450 years. To the continued operation of the same causes may be attributed the further curtailment of 200 years after the birth of Peleg, when the earth was divided, or 2,247 years before Christ; from which time the duration of human life gradually decreased, until about 1,500 years before Christ, when it became fixed, and stationary, under 100 years.

Short as is the Mosaic account of the first era in the history of the world, the usual duration of human life,

as there recorded, is sufficient evidence, how greatly the vigour of the human constitution in those times exceeded that of all subsequent times. There are also many evidences, in the same authority, that the climate of the whole world was more uniform, and congenial, to all animal and vegetable life then, than has ever been since; that the earth was then more abundant in all its various productions; and that many of the disasters which mankind have been since subject to, were then unknown.

If, in addition to these positive evidences from the sacred record, we may suppose, as many concurrent circumstances, and as the most ancient traditions seem to warrant, that the former habitable portion of the globe was more extensive, and less intersected by water than the present, it may not be unreasonable to conjecture, that the numbers of the human race on the earth previously to its destruction, or more probably its partial destruction, by the deluge, a period of 1656 years, exceeded the present amount of the population of the world. Nor is this conjecture unsupported by the opinions of several eminent writers, founded on arguments at least very ingenious, and apparently not inconsistent with the sacred record. All writers on the subject agree in representing the aspect of the antediluvian world as very different from that which it now wears. Wallerius, a distinguished name, supposes the proportion of land to sea was much greater then, than now; and that great part of the waters were hid under immense caverns, which sustained the antediluvian earth. De Luc, the celebrated philosopher of Geneva, supposes that of these, there were generally three different stages, one above the other; that the land, disposed with greater symmetry, though diversified, was not lifted into high, and inaccessible, mountains; that the seas, less deep, occupied not such immense spaces, but,

divided into small mediterranean seas, separated, and varied, the habitations of men, without rendering their communications very distant, difficult, or dangerous; that there were neither stormy winds, nor clouds, nor rains, because the inequalities of the earth were much less considerable; that all its hills were susceptible of cultivation, and that the dews sufficed to water the earth.

The first rains, mentioned by Moses, are those of the deluge itself, and the first winds, those which God caused to blow, to make the waters retire; and, in the 5th and 6th verses of the 2nd chapter of Genesis, it is expressly written, that "the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground."

This description, however, seems applied to the state of the earth immediately preceding the creation of man, and, whether the same provision continued after man became an inhabitant of the earth, is not expressly stated. The question, therefore, still rests upon conjecture; but if the rainbow appeared for the first time to Noah on leaving the ark, this may furnish further ground for the inference that, before the deluge, there were neither rains, nor clouds.

Of the antediluvian appearance of the face of the earth, little evidence is to be found in the Mosaic history; but, among the many grounds for inferring that the inequalities of the surface of the earth were less, previously to the deluge, than afterwards, is the declaration in the 20th verse of the 7th chapter of Genesis, that "Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered." It may, however, be fairly observed in answer, that the level from which this measurement commenced is not stated. It is certainly a fact well known, that Mount Ararat, on which

the ark rested, greatly exceeds this height; but that mountain may have been then raised to its present elevation, in the general convulsion of the earth; and if the olive-leaf, with which the dove returned to the ark, were plucked from off that mountain, there may be some ground to infer, that the climate of that elevation, where the olive-branch grew, was different from the present, and, consequently, that the ark rested considerably below the present summit of that mountain. It seems unnecessary to suppose, that the waters rose much above the highest elevations which the earth then presented; nor does it seem unreasonable to suppose; that by the operation of the various agencies then called into action, the torn, and dislocated, fragments were then thrust upwards, above the waters, in the stupendous masses, and lofty pinnacles, which the surface of the earth now presents. That the waters rose above the loftiest of these present summits, is a supposition wholly unsupported by evidence; and it is well known from observation, that above a certain elevation, no marine productions are discovered. This fact, however, may also be advanced in support of the opinion, that the deluge was not universal, but partial.

But if the natural causes, already supposed, be alone considered, these would still seem insufficient to account for all the supposed changes in the face, and climate, of the earth, following the deluge. In search of further causes, therefore, some philosophers have, on very ingenious, but also reasonable and consistent, arguments, supposed that, previously to the last universal catastrophe, the poles of the earth were perpendicular to the equator, and that, consequently, nights and days were then everywhere equal, and every climate of the earth was temperate; that, to operate the destruction of the earth, God changed the centre of gravity a little nearer to the southern pole, whereby the axis of the earth

became inclined, and by the consequent motion, all was overturned; the seas overwhelmed the lands; the sources of the abyss, or of the interior waters, were opened by the rupture of its caverns, and those waters, spouting from the bowels of the fractured globe, covered its surface; the valleys were sunk, and the mountains were elevated.

By this great change the atmosphere was disturbed, and climates altered; impetuous and variable winds, clouds, and rains, before unknown, obscured the face of heaven, and desolated the earth. By such vicissitudes the vigour of plants, and of all living creatures, was weakened, and the age of man was shortened.

Although this be a mere conjecture, unconfirmed by the direct testimony of the Sacred Scriptures, yet nothing is to be there found in opposition; nor does this conjecture in the slightest degree interfere with those other operating causes which are there recorded.

It is also quite consistent with the whole of sacred history to suppose that the Almighty Power, in all His works, operates by the laws of nature, which are His laws, proceeding from His will. We cannot consider the laws of nature to be regulations which some one has given to God, and we must, indeed, conceive that God has given them to Himself. It could not then be impious to say that God acted according to regulations which He had given to Himself. But this mode of representation would hardly be consistent with our notions of the Deity; and if we conceive the laws of nature to be regulations which God has once determined by Himself to be those which nature should obey, and from which He has never deviated since, then the limits of our human capacities would be involved in the notion. But if we conceive all existence to be the unceasing work of God, in which there is an impression everywhere of His infinitely perfect reason, which never

alters, then this enlarged view comprehends the continuous operation of Divine Reason, and eternal similarity with itself to the laws of nature. It thus is literally true, when it is said, that God permits the sun to rise, that he orders the changes of the seasons, and the course of lightning; but many men are desirous that God should arrange these things according to their own notions, in opposition to nature, which notions are held to be so perfect in themselves, that they think the power and wisdom of God is denied, if that which they attribute to Him is doubted. To inquire, therefore, into the operation of these laws is the privilege of man; but to seek for a cause beyond the Almighty Will is an abuse of that privilege, and is no less absurd, than presumptuous. In the due exercise of this high privilege, the Divine Will may be made more manifest to us; for, although the works of creation do not reflect the likeness of the Creator, yet they do exemplify His Almighty power, and furnish some guides in tracing the operation of His Will. If, then, in the exercise of this privilege, we suppose the axis and poles of the earth to have been, before the deluge, perpendicular to the equator, and we find, from actual observation, that the poles now diverge to the extent of twenty-three degrees and a fraction, we should assume that this deviation was for some wise purpose, and we should seek to discover that purpose, by an inquiry into the probable effects from such a cause; but we should assume nothing further, and, consequently, the result of that inquiry can amount only to a conjecture, and that only so far as it is in perfect consistency with Divine revelation.

Now, it is a fact important to be stated, that astronomers have not been able to discover the smallest inclination in the axis of any other planet, than this earth. It is also incontrovertible, that the great inclination in the axis of our planet is the source of

incessant conflicts in the atmosphere, and of many consequent disturbances on the surface of the earth. If the centre of gravity were in the centre of this globe, and the axis were perpendicular, the attraction of the sun, being equal on all parts of the globe, would keep its course steady, and without deviation in the track of the equator. The earth would perform the same journey of one degree, exactly in the same given time of twenty-four precise hours, and its whole revolution in 360 days. The moon, in like manner, attracted by the earth, would perform its rotation round it in thirty days, without fraction. Hence the most ancient computation of years of 360 days, and of months of thirty days, though totally inapplicable to the present months, or to years, either solar, or luni-solar. The fact that this mode of computation is recorded in the most ancient authors, affords no small presumption of the once existence of such a year, preserved, perhaps, by the ignorance of the reality, and reverence for antiquity; until, at length, the error was discovered to be too gross, and was, by degrees, more or less accurately rectified by succeeding generations. The few who survived the change, and their immediate progeny, confounded to find their ancient division, and duration, of the year inadequate, tried, as we find in history, a variety of expedients to conciliate their conditional computation with reality; and the first somewhat successful attempt was the addition of five intercalary days at the expiration of the old year. But precision, which had become extremely difficult, was reserved for discovery by the more advanced science of modern times. When the centre of gravity was changed, the motions of the earth, and of its attendant planet, became tremulous, and irregular, and no longer kept pace exactly with time. The nutation of its axis became, at least,

more considerable, and its rotation round its axis somewhat variable; the poles were diverged, and, in consequence, the track of its orbit became equally oblique to the equator. So long as the poles of the earth were perpendicular to the equator, and its course varied not from that line, the days and nights were equal throughout the year, and there is no reason to doubt that, as a natural consequence, perpetual spring reigned over the whole globe, and that its temperature was everywhere moderate. And this view is very much supported by the vegetable and animal remains, supposed to be antediluvian, as found in every part of the globe.

Such, at least, is the conclusion from our knowledge of the laws of nature, which are found by the observation, and experience of ages, to be universal, consistent, and immutable. Nor does the change supposed in the position of this globe imply any change in those laws, which still operate in the same unerring course, though producing very different results. And, as recorded by Moses, God seems to have forewarned Noah, that he must expect, as consequences from the great universal change, successive changes of seasons, and vicissitudes of heat and cold; from which warning may be inferred, that these changes had never been before experienced.

In an old, and rare, book of a learned Spanish Jesuit, Lacunza, under the assumed name of Ben Ezra, the same views appear to have been entertained by him, as will be seen in the following extracts translated from the original Spanish.

“It appears somewhat more than probable that this our earth, this terraqueous globe on which we dwell, is not now of the same form, nor in the same situation in which it stood from the beginning, till the great epoch of the universal deluge. This very important proposition may be easily proved by the present aspect of the

globe itself, and by all the observations which, till now, have been made, and every day are making, by the naturalists; much more, if this aspect, and these observations, be combined with what is contained in Holy Scripture."

The writer then proceeds to a learned, and minute, examination of the subject by the test of Scripture, and discoveries in Natural History, and draws the following conclusion:—"The actual aspect of this surface, and all the discoveries of the curious observers thereof, oblige us to believe, without being able rationally to doubt, that the waters of the sea, in former times, did occupy that which is now dry land, or at least, a great part thereof, and this not as it were in a state of passage, but constantly, and for many ages. Wherefore, because in all, or almost all, which is now called dry, or habitable, land (except only those mountains which naturalists call, with good reason, *primitive*) are found, at every step, clear and palpable remains of sea animals, not only on the surface of the earth, or a little beneath it, but to the depth of sixty or eighty feet; and this not only in the valleys, or plain grounds, but likewise in the hills, and secondary mountains, to which that name is given, because they appear to have been formed afterwards, and, as it were accidentally, by the violent, and confused, movement, and concourse of different materials.

"From this certain and undeniable principle, combined with sacréd history, it follows legitimately, that our terraqueous globe is not now, as it was in its first times, or in the times of its youth. Consequently, that there has happened in it, in times very remote from the present, some great and extraordinary accident, some universal subversion of all its parts, which hath caused it entirely to change its appearance, and obliged the inferior waters to change their site, and converted the

sea into dry land, and likewise the dry land into sea, and caused new seas to be formed, new rivers, new valleys, new elevations, new mountains; produced, in one word, a new earth, or new world, very different from that which, till then, had been. This accident can have been nothing else, let philosophers say as they please, than the universal deluge of Noah, whereby, as saith the Apostle Peter: — ‘The world that then was, being overflowed, perished;’ and, as saith Christ himself: — ‘The deluge came, and took them all away,’ Matt. xxiv. 39.

“The same general cause which produced, over all our globe, a new sea, and a new dry land, did, likewise, necessarily change the whole aspect of the heavens; I mean not only the ancient order, and temperature, of our atmosphere, but the ancient order, and disposition, of the sun, of the moon, and of all the heavenly bodies, with respect to the terraqueous globe. And what general cause was this? To me it appears that no other can be pointed out than the very omnipotent hand of the Creator, who, in his wrath against all the earth, corrupted to the last degree, caused it suddenly to move from one pole to another, inclining its axis $23\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$, and causing it to point with one of its extremities towards the star which we now call the Polar Star, or towards the extremity of the tail of the Lesser Bear.

“By this sudden inclination of the axis of the earth, there would follow two necessary consequences; first, that everything which is found in the surface of the globe, liquid, as well as solid, would lose its equilibrium, and be left in the utmost disorder, and confusion, not less horrible than universal; that all would be disordered, all subverted, things all falling one above another, and mingling altogether; and that the fountain of the great deep being broken up, the sea likewise bursting all its bounds, and pouring its waters over what

was the dry land, or earth, our globe would come to be entirely covered with water, as in the first moments of its creation.

“The second consequence, which ought necessarily to follow this inclination of the axis of the earth, is, that the circle, or equinoctial line, which till now had been one with the ecliptic, should separate into two, of which the latter would cut the former in two points diametrically opposite, which are called the *nodes*; that is, in the first degree of the constellation *Aries*, and in the first degree of the constellation *Libra*. Whereof the result would be, that our globe would no longer look to the sun with her equator, save only in two days of every year, the 21st of March and 22nd of September, presenting always, on all other days of the year, a new spot on its surface to the direct ray of the sun. And what would be the result from thence? There would naturally result the four seasons, which are called spring, summer, autumn, and winter, which, from the days of Noah, even until the day of the Lord, are and will be the ruin of the health of man, and, as it were, a universal punishment of pestilence, which has shortened our days, and made them full of pain, and almost insufferable.

“I am of opinion that, before the deluge, these four seasons of the year, which, at present, are our trouble and our ruin, were not; but that our globe always enjoyed a perpetual equinox, or equality of day and night. On this hypothesis (for it is no more than an hypothesis) I seem to understand everything, the observations of naturalists as well as what is found in the Holy Scriptures.

“First. Upon this hypothesis, all climes, and even all circles, parallel to the equator, though differing from one another, would be every one at all times uniform with itself.

“Secondly. The atmosphere of the earth being in all parts uniform, would be everywhere quiet; not certainly in that quietness which has the name of inertia, or immobility, as a rock or a mountain remains quiet in the place which God has appointed it, but in that kind of natural, and relative, rest which is proper to a fluid when it is not violently agitated by any external cause, which forceth it to lose its peace, its rest, or, which is the same thing, its equilibrium.

“Thirdly. In those times there were not, nor could naturally be, horrible, dark, and obscure clouds, by the concourse, and mixture, of all sorts of different vapours and exhalations of every kind; nor would there be the violent shock of the one against the other, from the contrariety of the winds; nor by these shocks would the electric fluid be enkindled; nor, consequently, would there be any of the heavy rains, thunders, or lightnings which now occasion such dread, and destruction, as well to the inhabitants of the earth, as to all the works of their hands.

“Whence it resulteth, and must naturally result, that obstructions, plagues, infirmities of every kind, which now are numberless, were then few, or unknown; and that men, and even beasts, lived, naturally, ten or twelve times longer than they live at present, dying of pure old age, after having lived healthy, and robust, some seven hundred, others eight hundred, and several more than nine hundred, years, as is clear from sacred history, that is, from the only authentic history which we have of those times.”—*Ben Ezra*, vol. ii. p. 243.

The considerations which follow are at too much length to be extracted, and are too important to be abbreviated. These relate to the destruction of this world by fire, the restoration of the axis of the globe to its former position, and the fulfilment of the prophecies of the new heaven, and the new earth.

We endeavour to comprehend, and investigate, the whole of nature by reason, and to represent it as a connected whole. The science which imposes on itself this task, is called natural science, or physics, in the most extensive sense of the word.

Why should we not endeavour to comprehend, and investigate, by the same process, the principles of good government, and the whole human economy?

In the whole of nature, we discover an action which knows no rest. What appears to our eyes as rest, is only a slow change. Every living, as well as every inanimate, thing hastens through innumerable degrees of development, from its origin, to its final destination. Its whole nature is not expressed in any single moment of its existence. It is ever changing, and ever dependent, more or less, on outward circumstances. In order to know it perfectly, we must, therefore, comprise, as in one focus, all the periods which it has passed, and is destined to pass. In other words, the infinite chain of existence which we call the world, or life, which otherwise appeared beyond our comprehension, should not merely be viewed as *it is*, but should be recognised as *it was*, and be calculated as *it will be*. We cannot say that moral science, any more than natural science, is exhausted, until all this is attained.

But it is very clear that we have here only projected some of the principal features of an ideal, or perfect, state. A science such as this will always remain incomplete to a finite being. Yet, notwithstanding an aim in view, we have no direction for our powers; and without an unattainable aim, the constant development for which the human race is destined, cannot advance. The question, therefore, is, "How can we possibly, within our narrow sphere, form a science for ourselves, which is an image, although a feeble one, of that ideal? Or, how can we frame laws and regulations for our worldly government;

which shall be like, though a feeble likeness, to the perfect, that is, the Divine.

A more deeply penetrating search into human nature, as well as into nature generally, shows us an admirable unity in all this infinite variety. However much objects, or human beings, may differ from one another, still, a deeper investigation discerns a common nature in them all. Thus, we find the same law of organisation in the whole human race, and in the whole animal kingdom, in spite of the greatest, and most varied, difference in their mental qualities, or, in their external form, and in their internal structure. While we have continually directed our attention more and more upon this fundamental unity, we have arrived at the conclusion, that it is only necessary to know one's-self in order to obtain a true insight into the nature of the whole human race; and to know a few animals of each class, in order to obtain a true insight into the nature of the whole animal kingdom. By that means, we can even obtain a tolerably correct idea of animals which no longer exist, and whose remains are brought out of the deep recesses of the earth. We again meet with this same unity in the vegetable kingdom, where also a fundamental investigation of some few organisations is sufficient to give a deep insight into its nature. In a further investigation, we find one point of unity common to the animal, and vegetable, kingdom; yet even this is only part of a higher unity, until the mind is lost in one fundamental unity of the whole of nature, which we encounter on whatever side we turn. The laws which influence our moon, equally influence the moons which accompany the other planets. The same laws govern the motion of those round the sun; and every planet that is discovered, is only a fresh confirmation of this law. But we do not stop here; we have grounds to assume that our sun, along with several others; at the same time, repeat, on a larger scale, what

is exhibited to us by our planetary system, on a smaller one. Now, if we once more return from those heavenly bodies, to the bodies upon our earth, we find that they are all, without exception, subject to the same laws of motion, and gravity, as those heavenly bodies; so that, from our experiments on motion made upon this earth, we may draw inferences which may be referred to the whole universe. If we be thoroughly acquainted with these laws of motion, we may calculate what was, at one time, the position of the heavenly bodies, and what it will be, at any given time. Natural philosophy offers us various examples of this. We have discovered a similar harmony of laws in the successive periods of various other natural events, although they are far from being carried out with the same exactitude as in astronomy; for instance, regular periods in the development of the earth, and in the movement of the magnetic needle, although the duration of these periods has not yet been determined.

So, we perceive that the same natural laws govern all races, and that all are susceptible of the same human feelings. We also observe a similar harmony of laws in the successive generations of the human race, although they also are far from being carried out with the same exactitude as in the sciences.

These examples show us clearly, what is accurately proved by philosophy, *that every well-conducted investigation of a limited object, discovers to us a part of the eternal laws of the Infinite Whole.*

Now, these laws, and the powers by which they are made to act, constitute the only invariable thing in nature. While all other things incessantly change their position; while the materials of which they are composed continually alter, the original power, and their laws, remain stationary; they alone endure amidst this change.

One human being, or one thing, is only distinguishable

from another, by the laws which are expressed in them ; for we find the most dissimilar human beings, or things, composed of similar materials, and the further we proceed in our investigations, we shall be more convinced that matter in everything, as well as the power by which life and action are sustained in human beings, as in all nature, are everywhere the same ; but that which gives human beings, or other objects, animate or inanimate, their determined character, and forms infinite variety, is only the manner in which the actions take place in everything, the natural laws by which all is arranged, and guided. In short, things are incessantly passing from one condition to another ; in one constant growth out of the same matter, by means of the same powers. But matter itself in the human, or in any other, form is only space occupied by the primitive forces of nature ; therefore, it is the law according to which the human being, or the thing, is formed, from which it derives its invariable peculiarity. But that which constitutes the invariable in a person, or a thing, and which distinguishes it, is correctly called its *essence*, or *spirit* ; and that part of its essence, or spirit, which it does not share with others, its *peculiar* essence, or spirit. We may, therefore, affirm, that the natural laws, according to which a person, or a thing, is formed, taken together, constitute its peculiarity ; and that the knowledge of the natural laws in action, is the knowledge of the spirit of the person, or the essence of the thing. But the spirit, or essence of a person, or thing, does not consist in one natural law, which may be expressed as an idea, in a proposition ; but in a union of various natural laws, which form, together, a higher law, for which, however, we in vain seek an expression. We may, therefore, regard the spirit, or essence, of each person, or thing, as composed of innumerable others ; but in itself it is only part of a still greater chain of being, and is connected by them with a

higher unity, which, again, is only a part of a still higher, and so on, till, at length, thought loses itself in the Infinite All. Thus, all natural laws form together a unity, which, viewed in their activity, constitute the essence of the whole world. As for example, in astronomy, the earth can never be comprehended if we do not, at the same time, consider it as a part of the solar system; and so, also, man can never be perfectly comprehended, if we do not, at the same time, consider him as a part of the Divine Nature, as manifested to us in Manhood and Godhead, combined in the same person, in Jesus Christ, which, again, is only a part of a still higher,—the combination of the three persons of the Godhead, making the fulness of the Godhead bodily, in one Incomprehensible, Infinite All. Or, if we may venture so to present it in words,—Himself; His own well-beloved, equal to himself; His own Spirit, the essence of Himself, and equal to Himself; united in one eternal I Am. Three in One; forming the complete and perfect One, and comprising, embracing, saving, restoring All.

If we investigate more closely these laws, so far as revealed to us, we find that they harmonise so perfectly with reason, that we may assert with truth, that the harmony of the laws of nature consists in their being adapted to the dictates of reason; or, rather, by the perfect coincidence of the laws of nature, and the laws of reason.

The chain of natural laws, which, in their activity, constitute the essence of everything, may be viewed either as a natural thought, or, more correctly, as a natural idea; and since all natural laws together constitute but one unity, the whole world is the expression of an infinite all-comprehensive idea, which is one with an infinite reason, living and acting in everything. In other words, the world is a revelation of the united power of creation, and reason, in the Godhead.

We now first comprehend how we can recognise nature through reason, for reason again recognises herself in all things. But, on the other side, we can also conceive how our knowledge will never be more than a faint image of the great whole; for our reason, although originally related to the infinite, is limited by the finite, and can only imperfectly disengage itself from it. No mortal has been permitted entirely to penetrate, and comprehend, the whole. Filled with devout awe, he must be conscious of the limits of his powers, and acknowledge that the feeble ray which he is permitted to behold, nevertheless raises him far above the dust. Yet we are not connected with the inward essence of nature by the clear sight of reason alone. As, in our taste for the beautiful, we receive a sense for the impression of the spirit in forms, and, in the conscience, a sense for the impressions of reason in life, so we also receive a sense for the impressions of reason in the operations of nature, by which we feel its proximity, and without a distinct view of the individual parts, we are seized with an impression of the majesty of the whole. This anticipating consonance with nature, guides reason in its inquiry, and is again awakened, strengthened, and purified by it: both are most intimately united, yet in such a manner, that the former is most dominant in life, the latter in science.

It will now be quickly felt how wrong it would be to make utility the aim of this, or of any other science; for, when we ask the use of an object, we infer that we attribute no substantial value to the thing itself, but only in respect to something else, which must, therefore, be superior to it. If science, therefore, is only to be pursued on account of its utility, there must be something more worth the attention of a rational being, than the use of reason, or something in man which is superior to his mind; but since this is impossible,

science is good both in and for itself, and it requires no extraneous inducement to strive after it for its own sake. It should be pursued on its own account, both as an expression of our inward life, and as an acknowledgment of that which is divine within us. That it also produces the most excellent results in a lower sphere, is a consequence of the harmony of reason which animates everything. It is exactly these results which are called the uses of science; and, so comprehended, we may call it the excellence of science seen from a lower point of view. On this depends the completeness of the observation, and hence it possesses an immediate interest to a thinking being. Seen in this point of view, the use of natural science is twofold, since it partly strengthens our powers ever for the purposes of social life, and partly gives us means for their employment. Besides the general development, and perfection, which every science endeavours to effect on our mental powers, natural science, especially, contributes to enlighten and strengthen our finite reason, whilst it exhibits, in a regulated series of contemplations, the eternal laws of reason, at the same time governing the external world. Impressed with this view, man enters upon each occupation with a more acute vision, with increased confidence, and with a pure delight, and fulfils it as one who acts upon inward conviction, not following merely a precept from without. The soul is immediately brought into an inward peace, and in unison with the whole of nature, and is delivered from every superstitious fear, which always originates in the idea that it is possible that powers, which are contrary to the order of reason, might intrude into the eternal course of nature; and thus conscience, when it testifies to that unison, is best described in the words of Scripture, as "the peace of God that passeth all understanding."

This, in short, is the effect of an active love of science

beaming forth in innumerable ways from within. In reference to the external sphere of action of the powers in nature, the excellence of science may be comprehended in the one great truth—it *teaches us to govern nature.*

Nature offers the few necessities of life but sparingly to uncivilised man, and only affords nourishment to a small number in a large circumference. Science urges her to greater generosity, and causes the earth to become more fruitful, and its products to be improved, and manufactured, for purposes which could hardly have been anticipated in the original matter. Thus, man provides himself with an easy, and comfortable, condition in life, where, previously, necessity could hardly have found nourishment to allay its wants. Where men formerly laboured thoughtlessly, as mere tools, and passed their time in servile toil, science exempts them from this by means of machines, which work in place of them, and fulfil the purpose still more completely. Man by nature is limited to a narrow sphere; this is enlarged by his insight into nature. By the aid of science he sails round the earth, dives to the bottom of the sea, flies through the air, and thus is no longer fettered to the spot of earth where he was born. A deep investigation into nature has enabled us to enlarge even the boundaries of our senses, so that, by artificial instruments, we discover a world where, to our unassisted senses, there only appeared a vanishing magnitude. We discover mountains and valleys in distant planets, and systems of suns where, formerly, the most daring imagination did not venture to place their creations. Thus, the whole existence of man is enlarged, and becomes more spiritual; so that it is evident, that science and its results, are mutually strengthened in their operations. Science assists in protecting whatever it presents to us. With-

out its aid man would be tossed to and fro by the wild struggles of the elements, which were appointed for more universal purposes in nature. By science he learns to control one natural power by another, and often to guide to a salutary end that which appears most threatening. Thus, it teaches us to alter the course of heaven's destructive lightning, to stem the power of water, so that it may serve our purposes, to sway the consuming operations of fire, and to force from it the most important services. Even if the universal forces in nature be in direct opposition to the inner forces by which our body subsists, science teaches us to find a remedy, an antidote against poison, a cure, or even a protecting power, against sickness; and, against an infection threatening life, which, formerly, used to destroy the population of whole nations, and to throw them back for centuries in cultivation and development, science brings a union of forces by which it is weakened, or even destroyed. We may even regard the untutored strength of man, unguided by reason, as a crude, and hostile, work of nature, which frequently destroyed the fruits which had been developed by the civilising industry of many centuries. Natural science has contributed, in an extraordinary manner, to form war into a scientific art, which can scarcely be brought to a high degree of perfection by any nation, if it have not, in other respects, attained a considerable degree of development. And thus, this expression of power, which is at all times dangerous, might have lost, at least on one side, some of its horrors. In short, science facilitates, enlarges, and in various ways secures, our condition in life, and removes various obstacles, which prevent the free activity of the spiritual development of mankind.

All precepts which can be given for the investigation of nature must spring from the fundamental truth:

That the whole of nature is the revelation of an Infinite Rational Will, and that it is the task of science to recognise as much of it as is possible to finite power. From this great fundamental truth there proceeds a number of fundamental laws, which must be to man as eternal guiding stars. His chief task is: To seek for Reason in Nature. He must, therefore, admit that natural laws everywhere harmonise with reason, and that every appearance of an exception to this rule must proceed from the imperfection of his knowledge.

No contradiction is possible in the laws of nature; on the contrary, they are all in the most perfect harmony, and constitute together one sole inextinguishable whole. If we direct our attention to the cause of the changes, we see that everything proceeds with perfect consistence. If, then, we direct our attention to what has been effected, we shall be compelled to admire each human representation of surpassing wisdom. We can frequently perceive so distinctly the exact consequence of events, that they become a principle of knowledge to us. The wisdom of the end in view is elevated so far above our capacity, that our reflections upon it may certainly lead to investigation, but can give us no foundation to build upon.

Natural laws are as invariable as the will from which they originate.

The fundamental forces of nature are indestructible. By fundamental forces, we understand the simplest, and most original, indications by which the creative power is recognised in external nature.

The same forces always act according to the same laws. Actions which are really alike must proceed from the same forces. In order to investigate the laws of forces, we must endeavour to recognise each particular force in its purity, its laws of action in its simplicity; but, at the same time, never forget that each

force is only a part of the Infinite Whole, and only subsists so far as that exists.

We endeavour to comprehend Infinite Reason in Nature with our limited capacities, therefore we must constantly be distrustful of our own knowledge, and only confide in our representation of the thoughts of Nature, in so far as they are clearly determined, and are in harmony with all which, according to our perfect conviction, is indisputably true.

We must compare the evidence of reason with experience; we must endeavour to change the evidence of experience, into an evidence of reason.

The basis of universal natural philosophy, both according to the idea which we have exhibited, as well as by the manner it has developed itself in the course of time, is experience. Nature exhibits to us many of her changes so strongly and visibly, that we cannot avoid remarking them. These are the everyday experiences, which are not called so because most of them are of daily occurrence, but because they are perceived by no more than an everyday attention. Others we only discover by thought, while we turn our attention upon them. To gain knowledge from these, in this manner, is called *to observe*. Finally, there are many experiences which are not immediately exhibited to us by Nature in a very intelligible manner. In order to detect their essential character more narrowly, we must endeavour to bring the objects together, so that their effects may be comprehensible to us.

In other words, in order to see, as perfectly as possible, the mode of operation in nature, we must understand how we can absolutely set them in action, and, as it were, compel them to act under our eyes. This is called, *to make experiments—to experimentalise*.

Nature obliges us to make daily experience; she invites us to make observations; we perform the expe-

riment ourselves; it is a work of the most perfect freedom. It is easily perceived that these are all degrees of one and the same kind of knowledge, which are so intermingled that we can draw no defined limits between them. Each experience easily passes, with every thinking man, into a closer contemplation, which, without any perceptible gap, leads him on to actual observations.

From a mere arbitrary direction of attention to the point which, at that time, particularly constitutes the object of curiosity, he soon begins to compare, to distinguish, and to arrange the whole variety perceptible to the senses, which appears to be in connection. He endeavours to sharpen his senses by practice; he strives to measure their power, to prove them, and to determine them, and, where it is possible, to correct their mistakes. By habit he acquires a readiness to discover what is rare, and peculiar, in natural events, to find out their less remarkable similarities, and differences, and exactly to distinguish what belongs to each individual part. Where this no longer suffices, he seeks, by artificial means, to facilitate his observations, to widen their circle, to make them more accurate. He measures magnitudes by arrangements invented for the purpose; he understands how to enlarge, and to render more distinct, those objects which were too small, or too remote, for the power of his senses; in short, by artificial and arbitrary means he investigates more and more into nature, and is gradually changed into an experimentalist, who uses the same means as the ordinary observer, but adds new ones, and particularly distinguishes himself by greater freedom. Where Nature operates with variously combined forces, he seeks to retain some of them, in order to allow the others to work more freely—even to retain all the others, in order to let one singly express itself with freedom.

What Nature accomplishes on a great scale, he must often endeavour to represent on a smaller, in order to bring it nearer to the eye; and what Nature presents on so small a scale that it would even elude the keenest sense, he must know how to render visible even to the less quick-sighted, for which purpose he has certainly far more means than the casual observer. He must know how to bring what Nature effects only for one sense, before the judgment-seat of the others, in order that the more acute may clearly comprehend, what the weaker only dimly perceived. Indeed, in order to view properly the nature of the thing, he places it frequently in perfectly new relations never before offered by nature; so that his previous suppositions are either by that means strengthened, or overthrown. In short, he everywhere seeks to compel the most secret powers of Nature to reveal themselves, and endeavours to determine their course by measure and weight. The elaboration of the whole riches of external knowledge constitutes the great connecting art of experience, whose cultivation, to a degree previously unknown, forms the peculiarity of modern Natural Science.

This art presupposes many spiritual, and material, natural endowments, and much dexterity acquired by long practice; yet all these qualities would be useless, if they were not guided by a mind familiar with Nature. To have seen a great number of natural phenomena is not to have an insight into Nature. Experience only becomes instructive to us by a correct combination. To observe is to detect the actions of Nature; but we shall not advance far in this path, unless we have a notion of its character. To make experiments is to lay questions before Nature; but he alone can do that beneficially who knows what he should ask. Through the whole art of experience, it is, therefore, necessary that, upon one side, the inquirer should constantly

retain the whole in his view,—for, otherwise, it is impossible to have a clear representation of the parts; on the other side, that he should regard nothing as beneath his attention, for it still belongs to the whole. He should never forget that, the forces by which life and motion are preserved throughout nature, are found in the least, and most insignificant, as well as in the greatest, and most remarkable objects. Then he will enter upon his work with the utmost earnestness, and attention, reverentially acknowledging that it is the Eternal Source of Nature who speaks to him, even in the most insignificant object. With this spirit, and with this constant view of the whole, occupations which are frequently troublesome, and which enter into the smallest trifles, lose their insignificance to him; he elevates them to himself, and does not allow himself to be drawn down by them. He does not content himself with a single one-sided experience. He seeks everywhere to combine it with others, to deduce the one from the other, and to arrange all in such a manner, that the whole course of observations, or experiments, represent one natural law.

The same object is therefore exposed to the most different actions; the same action is tried, if not upon all bodies, which would be impossible, yet upon many of each division, and on the most remarkable, which chiefly differ from one another. We must besides search for the same effect as variously as possible in the observations, and produce them in the greatest variety of forms in the experiment, in order thence to be able to see, with so much the more distinctness, and certainty, the distinctions under which they occur. It is only by giving the observations and experiments which are made such a *connection, such an extension and variety*, that his labour can procure him knowledge, and become more than an imperfect account of an

isolated phenomenon. If in one or more connected experiments he has seen a certain series of phenomena, which succeeded one another in a determined order, he begins his experiment from the opposite side, in order to see whether all follow in the reversed order, that is, the experiment must be made in both the *opposed directions* that are possible. It is said in chemistry, that a proof is only complete when it is both analytical, and synthetical. If it be possible by observations to follow the same course, this must naturally happen. In this manner we are most certainly convinced that we have had the correct representation of the connection of natural events. Yet, with all this, we might be easily deceived, if we allowed circumstances which were foreign to the purport of the inquiry, to be mingled with it. When this happens, the observation on the experiment is different from what we expected, and with regard to this idea, we say that it is not *pure*. Therefore, in observation, we must turn all possible attention to the surrounding circumstances. In experiments which refer to the nature of matter, we must only select it pure, free from extraneous matter; and, where it depends on the form, we must procure instruments whose perfection, for the attainment of the given end, most nearly approaches mathematical exactitude; but since we can seldom exhibit an object which perfectly harmonises with the idea, we must endeavour to discover the deviations, and bring their influence to bear; in chemistry we must, therefore, consider the nature, and magnitude, of the unavoidable impurities; we must also know, and calculate upon, the imperfections in the instruments of measurement, and thus everywhere penetrate to the idea, through the senses. If to all this we still add a complete statement of all the observations, or the definitions, belonging to the experiment,

so that when each alteration is noted down, its magnitude is confirmed, and its connection with others, and its mutual relation to outward circumstances, is not lost sight of, the explanation is exact. Finally, in order to be certain that our senses have not deceived us, we must frequently repeat our observations and experiments ; and, to go on improving, we must go on making our observations and experiments ; and thus, go on learning and improving for ever.

The foregoing remarks, so far as these apply to Natural Science, are partly taken, enlarged, and adapted from the writings of that good and great man, and enlightened philosopher, Oersted, already referred to.

If such be, as here described, the spirit, the signification, and the end of natural science, when so pursued, why should not the far higher, and more important study of the Human Mind, which involves the principles of human government, be pursued in a like spirit, and view, to the same end,— the moral improvement,— the present and eternal welfare, of the human race ?

If the powers of the human mind, so directed, led to the discovery of that mysterious, and instantaneous, medium for the communication of thought between the extremities of this world, who can say that the same powers, so directed, may not extend the medium of communication beyond the boundaries of this world, and bring us into intimate relations with the inhabitants of the countless spheres beyond ; and thus, through the aid of Divine Wisdom, enlarge our sphere of action, for further, and higher, and, in endless succession, still higher manifestations of Almighty Power, Infinite Mercy, and Divine Love ?

That this present world, and its occupations, as at present seen, should be the ultimate end, and object, of its creation, is a thought which every human mind

rejects, as inconsistent with Nature, and with the Divine Will as revealed therein.

We also see that the Almighty Power acts through the unchanging laws of Nature, and uses for Its highest purposes, Its highest exercise of creative power, Man. From this we may infer—and Divine Love has confirmed the inference by His revealed Word—that it is the Divine Will to bring Mankind into more immediate communication with Himself, as when He walked side by side with Man, in the Garden of Paradise. That the Personal Presence can never be restored to us in the present dispensation of this world, or while human beings remain in their present unprepared, and imperfect state, the human mind seems itself to declare to us; and that such can only come to pass in the restoration of all things. But that, as a preparation for that higher, and holier state, an insight into things beyond this world may be permitted to us, very far beyond our present knowledge, or present powers of imagination, is, nevertheless, quite within the present scope of our Reason, and is in perfect coincidence with all we know, and all we believe; and, moreover, is perfectly consistent with that longing desire which every human mind has sometimes experienced. And we see, and know, it to be a law of Nature that, every innate desire carries with it the evidence that the gratification, or fulfilment, will be provided for.

But if Philosophy, and our knowledge of Science, have brought us to entertain these views, and if we find these views to be in perfect consistence with the revealed Word of God, how much more reason have we for inferring from all this, that if we frame laws and regulations for our human government, in the same perfect consistence with His revealed Word, we shall then be acting more in conformity with His Will; and that, by thus bringing mankind into better accordance with the

laws of Nature, we shall be thereby advancing the further fulfilment of the Divine Will, in further manifestations of Divine Power, and Mercy, and Love?

If we were to frame laws and regulations for our human government in better accordance with the Divine Spirit, of doing unto others as we would others should do unto us, we should find the laws of Nature acting much more with us, and we should find our power greatly strengthened for controlling, and counteracting, the evil influences, which, like the conflicting currents in the atmosphere, and in the ocean, of this world, are ever acting in a state of antagonism to natural order and harmony, producing confusion and discord, and throwing everything out of its natural, and proper, place and position. We should, by such a testimony to justice, and mercy, enlist on the side of order so large a portion of mankind, that the amelioration of the condition of the whole would follow as a necessary consequence. Inequalities of condition would still, and ever must, remain; but the sense of justice, administered with mercy, would go far to reconcile all to their allotted station, however humble, however fallen. Human beings, however wretched, who have themselves only to complain of, are generally silent. But a sense of injustice, which more or less attends every wrong, arouses the worst passions of the human nature, and instigates the deepest crimes. There is in the human mind an inherent sense, and love, of justice which, in the world, is seldom disregarded with impunity, and which is overcome, or kept in its proper place, only by the higher, and more sublime, feeling of Divine Love, inculcated by the Christian Religion. But wrong, though it never becomes right, works, as by a natural law, even in this world, retributive justice, out of which good comes;—and we may be led, even by our own observation, to believe that no wrong was ever perpe-

trated by an individual, a people, or a government, without a sensible reaction, more or less distant in time, but unerring, as by the inflexible decree of an inexorable Judge, under an immutable law. That this innate love of justice is an evidence of Divine nature, is as certain as that justice is one of the Divine attributes. That it should be respected, therefore, by a strict observance in all human laws and institutions, and in all transactions between man and man in this life, it may be assumed, is essential for permanence, and prosperity, to an individual, a people, a government, or a nation. But if obedience to constituted authority be a duty, and who can doubt it who believes in Him who said; "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's?" the more imperative, if possible, is the duty of making just laws, and more swift and heavy may be expected the infliction which then follows injustice and oppression. Of this truth the great French Revolution is an example never to be forgotten by nations. Less prominently, but not less certainly, is the same truth ever working out its own way, as a law of Nature, to overthrow, or change, and improve, all the governments of all the nations of the earth. And the time of the overthrow will surely come, if the timely change, and improvement, be not made. As well may Nations and Governments attempt to stop the laws of Nature, as to stop this ever-working truth, which is working out a universal reformation in the moral world with the unerring certainty of natural laws in the physical world. The root, or foundation, of this truth is Justice, which must be recognised, and acknowledged, and respected in the observance by all People, Governments, and Nations throughout the world.

It was Dr. Arnold's sublime and beautiful view of life, that "the highest virtue of which a man is capable, and the last at which he arrives, is, — 'sense of justice.'"

In the observance of this truth is the best security for social order. The more the social arrangements are developed, securing the rights of each individual man, the stronger grows the inward consciousness of right, and this supports the laws. It originates in the inner mind of man ; but it is awakened, and strengthened, by being outwardly realised. Therefore, the regulations for upholding the laws, and the disposition to approve them, strengthen one another, so that the security becomes greater, although the punishments are made less terrible.

The desire of vengeance which exists in man is often a natural feeling for justice, but its abuses are fearful ;—so fearful, that the laws are a necessary barrier to it for the preservation of social order ; they protect one man from the vengeance of another ; but, when justice requires it, they further offer a satisfaction. However imperfect this may sometimes be, the universal knowledge of it softens, and lessens the desire of, vengeance in man. Hence it arises, that the knowledge of this outward reason protecting him, elevates his own rational life, and his respect for reason, which is connected with it.

From this, every reflecting mind will perceive that laws do not only produce an immediate effect, but that also, by unfolding a disposition conformable to law, they weaken and extinguish the force of evil designs, even when they are most extravagant ; and should a whole people simultaneously disturb the existing regulations, this disposition yet strengthens those who labour for law and order, and does not allow itself to be entirely extirpated by those who are seized with a mania for destruction, but often restrains them, and, indeed, calls them back.

If, therefore, we now consider that laws have, we may say, many thousand times, prevented various crimes, and that, therefore, the foresight of human law-givers has often, for thousands of years, prevented the

abuse of the free will of man, we thus see the possibility of his actions being governed without his being himself oppressed. The direction which laws have given to the free will of man, in many respects beneficial, has been no oppression, for he is free, and can resist the laws; but even when he goes astray he is still the expression of a rational being, who cannot entirely escape from Reason, and from respect to the surrounding government of Reason.

If human laws were made more in accordance with Justice and Mercy, how much stronger would be that respect to the government of Reason! How much more might we expect to see the results of human action in accordance with the Divine Will! How much more might we expect to see the limited wisdom of Man enlarged by a more perfect unison with Infinite Wisdom! However small we may esteem all that human wisdom has here accomplished, in comparison with that which is performed by the Divine government of the world, yet we might then see more clearly, that the infinite wisdom of the Eternal Almighty God, as displayed in the universal laws of existence, is able to guide everything according to His Divine Will, without making casual alterations;—by human agency, and free will. Inexplicable things to us, with our present knowledge, would then be brought within our comprehension; and though the finite will never be able to comprehend the Infinite, we shall then see more clearly, that Creation was less for the manifestation of Almighty Power, than of Divine Love in perfect consistence with Justice, and Mercy, and Truth. We shall then see the daring presumption of those human laws which usurp, and execute Almighty Power, without any participation in Divine Love, and we shall no longer wonder at the result; or, our wonder will then be, that such presumption was not visited by more swift, and terrible, consequences.

We shall then have less faith in that *expediency* on which most of our laws are founded, and more faith in that higher, and only safe, and true, principle of righteousness and love.

We shall then see how hard, and cruel, and inexpedient it is to say to a man, that his life should be valued at a particular rate, depending upon local, or temporary, expediency. But this is the very reasoning upon which human laws are founded. On what other ground can we pretend to inflict capital punishment? It is not that, in the deficiencies of human nature, we are able to determine — what can only be decided by a Divine tribunal — the exact degree of moral turpitude attached to each particular offence. But, while mankind are struggling, as we are all having to struggle, with the imperfections of our senses, this is the last mode which the legislation can devise for the preservation of civil order, and we adopted this last mode before we fairly tried to find a better. Indeed, all our experience has proved to us, that this last mode, instead of being the best, is the worst; and so satisfied have we become of this fact, that, of late years, capital punishment has been removed from most of those crimes for which it was before considered expedient to inflict it. Now, if the ground of expediency, on which alone those human lives, so sacrificed, were taken, be proved to have had no foundation, as subsequent experience has proved, and as subsequent alteration of practice does admit, what can be said for those human lives so sacrificed to a false, and groundless, expediency? What more can be said in extenuation than that it was done in ignorance; that it was a mistake. And yet, with all this experience, we still continue to inflict capital punishment, and on the same ground of expediency!

Sir Robert Peel, in his speech in the House of Com-

mons, on the Punishment for Forgery Bill, 24th of May, 1830, said:—"If it can be made out that the apprehension of the punishment of death prevents the commission of the crime—if public morals are protected by fear of this punishment—if without this punishment there would be a great increase of the offence—if these things can all be made out, then there will be very strong, and, indeed, very powerful reasons for maintaining the punishment. If it can be shown that the fear of death does prevent the commission of the crime, and if property is defended by it—which is not immaterial—I conceive that we shall not be justified in abolishing it."

It is evident that, on the same ground as here taken by Sir Robert Peel, the infliction of capital punishment might be justified in every case of petty larceny. But does the apprehension of the punishment of death prevent the commission of the crime? What was Sir Robert Peel's opinion on this question? The following were his words, in his speech on asking leave to introduce the Forgery Laws Amendment Bill, 1st of April, 1830:—"I have no hesitation in avowing that I am a strong advocate for the mitigation of capital punishments. I wish to remove, in all cases where it is practicable, the punishment of death; for it is impossible to conceal from ourselves that capital punishments are more frequent, and the criminal code more severe, on the whole, in this country than in any other country in the world."

Here is a broad admission of the inefficiency of capital punishments generally, for the object intended, namely, the prevention of crime; on which ground alone he always rested the only pretence of justification for resorting to this "last mode which legislation can devise for the preservation of civil order."

The true answer to Sir Robert Peel, and to all others

who advocate the infliction of the punishment of death, even for the highest crime of murder, is that we have no authority for taking upon ourselves such an exercise of Divine Power, and that if we had more respect for the government of reason, we should see that, under no circumstances can it be in accordance with the Divine Will, for human beings to cut off the highest work of the Creator, on the pretence of executing justice, until they can claim the other Divine attributes of love, and righteousness; and, therefore, that under no circumstances can it be expedient for erring human beings to inflict the punishment of death on their fallen fellow-creatures. It was not considered expedient to inflict that punishment on the first recorded murderer, for "the Lord said unto him, whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him seven-fold."

If human laws should ever be made in accordance with justice and mercy, that must be on the foundation of Divine love, and righteousness, which would be perfect wisdom; and that would be the government of reason, and that would be found to be the most expedient, and the only safe ground, for, on no other foundation than this, can any human legislation ever be expedient. If such a government of reason should ever be established on earth, the limited wisdom of man would then be enlarged, and we should see things more perfectly. But the time is not far distant when we shall look back with amazement and horror at those human laws, made and executed by the worst of criminals, which oppressed the poor and the helpless, and which cut off the ignorant and guilty, in the midst of their ignorance and guilt, as an acceptable service to the God of justice, and mercy, and love, and which did all this without one effort to save and to restore!

We shall then learn, that to execute judgment with good effect, it must be done in righteousness and love;

that just laws must be made, and justice administered; and that this can only be done by just men, with just motives; and that, not until they have themselves attained to this perfection shall they venture on the daring presumption of making laws, and executing judgments, which usurp the Divine prerogative, lest they also should be "cut off out of the land of the living."

We see, in this world, that all things in existence proceed from something undeveloped, to pass through an imperceptible series of developments. We see that everything in the world proceeds from something in which the reasonable is concealed like a hidden germ. We can no more explain why this is, than we can explain why reason is, as it is; but that it is so in Nature will in vain be denied. Each individual being begins his existence as a wholly unconscious embryo, and, after birth, as an irrational infant; and we see that the human faculties only require the influence of the entire universal arrangements of reason, founded upon the Divine nature, in order to develop themselves. This reveals the rational nature of man, and an embryo faith is the necessary consequence of this rational nature. If we were merely to call this embryo faith a faculty of believing, it would not sufficiently express its true condition; it is a disposition, and a necessity, to feel a conviction of the truth of the reasonable, although it is not brought under our cognisance. The more comprehensive the unity of reason, so much the more intimately is it connected with our own nature, or so much the more numerous are the points of union in which the unity of reason, which stands before us an object, amalgamates with our own rational nature. Both the rational within us, as well as the rational without us, is an act of reason. It is only the imper-

fection of our intellect that causes us to make a distinction between the eternal creative power, and eternal reason; in reality they are inseparable. The creative power gives the thing its action, reason gives this action its form, which comprises in each thing a variety of subordinate forms, just as an idea can conceive in itself many subordinate ideas. If we turn to our own essence, we must then acknowledge, that all its faculties, taken together, constitute *one* work of the eternal creating reason, or rational creative power, both expressions denoting the same thing. If we now view God as that essence, of whose being we must be convinced by our own essence, we must then bear in mind, that the former, as much as the latter, is an entire living Being, though, in every respect, infinitely more glorious. From Him we receive, through the whole of existence, innumerable influences; but our conviction of this springs from the intellectual faculties of our nature. By the hidden power of all these united effects the knowledge of God is awakened within us. Some people have such a strong internal life of reason that this consciousness is very easily excited; most people require many, and powerful, means of excitement; to these belong communications from other independent beings. Were such only believed as communications, a faith upon authority would alone be produced, which is almost useless to our rational existence; but if these communications awake those hidden faculties of the mind which are adapted to faith, so that these are developed into a lively consciousness of God, and the consequent endeavour to live in God, then this faith would never be designated, a faith upon authority. When our reason, acting with consciousness, endeavours with all its powers to comprehend the connection between the actions of the God we believe in,

and all that is effected, a force and clearness of conviction proceeds from it, by which faith is changed into knowledge.

The consciousness of what virtue and duty are, undoubtedly begins, with the human race, as it does with each individual man, in faith. For example, we feel the duty of speaking the truth long before we can prove that it is necessary for the human race; indeed, it would be a sad thing if we did not discover a strong love of truth, and a sincere veneration for this virtue among all estimable men, although among millions, only individuals are met with who have turned this belief into knowledge. But we must not confound this true knowledge, with the nominal knowledge which is occasionally acquired by finely imagined proofs, if along with it we lose sight of the source of existence. The knowledge which we possess of a virtue must be rather founded upon natural faith, than on itself, otherwise it is dead and powerless. This, here applied to *one* virtue, may be easily applied to others.

Thus, there is eternal infinite Reason, which comprehends all the laws of existence; through it everything receives its whole individuality, its whole form, taking the word in its most comprehensive sense; but that which bestows being on things is the creative power, inasmuch as this power acts under different forms; it has its individuality in each case by the law of reason, or, the sum of the laws of reason, according to which it acts. So we are to understand when we talk of creative powers. But the creative reason, and the creative power, are not really two separate things; we are only obliged by our reasoning powers to separate them while under our observation. When in speaking of man we attribute to him reason, imagination, feelings, we use the word "reason" in a far more limited sense. It is the same eternal Reason which gives form to our intel-

lectual creative power, and its mode of perception to our faculty of receiving impressions ; but both in imagination, and in feeling, it acts unconsciously, namely, without the intervention of the legislating faculty of reason ; in human reason, on the contrary, it appears conscious of its own nature. In the same way reason acts secretly, and unknown, in the other faculties ; and must we not confess that, conscience is likewise an inward feeling, which is able to guard against the unreasonable, and justifies the reasonable, even in innumerable cases where we do not perceive the whole condition of reason ?

It is hardly necessary to say that *each* of our faculties is also in conscious co-operation with reason.

Thus, the eternal order of Reason reveals itself through all finite existence. Theologians certainly teach that God has created, and wisely regulated, the world ; but their attention is generally so occupied, and carried away in other directions, that they bring it less clearly forward ; and this effect has been most particularly produced by their views on the misery, and fall, of man, introduced by sin. The opinion that man's sin has corrupted the whole of nature, is entirely opposed to the distinct evidence of natural science. It is quite certain that the laws of nature were the same, before the fall, as they are now ; though changes may have since taken place, which have disturbed the former order, and regularity, with which those universal laws worked with regard to this globe ; and, undoubtedly, the moral and physical condition of mankind has since undergone various successive changes. But man, even in his state of innocence, is represented as designed to take nourishment, and to multiply his race. The naturalist cannot doubt that the construction of the human body was the same in the beginning, as it is now. But it is not necessary to be a naturalist, to feel convinced that the

whole animal kingdom, from the earliest times till man arose, and later, even to our own days, has developed itself according to the same laws, and that the human body is comprehended in this connection. There is nothing which can lead to the opinion, that man was altered after the fall ; and this, perhaps, has not been directly asserted by any one. We must, therefore, rest upon the destructive influence which sin has exercised on the spiritual powers ; and even here we must guard against exaggeration, by remarking how man, already in his state of innocence, showed that he was as easily seduced on the side of piety, as he was beguiled on the side of his understanding.

The world, as a Divine work, must be, in its nature, perfect for the purpose for which it was designed ; but since man, in consequence of his limited powers, easily adopts a mistaken view of the world around him, and so much the more, the less he strives after the Divine light, the world appears to him, as something separate, and apart from God. So the world appears, *through the guilt of man*, but not corrupted and destroyed in consequence of its own nature.

Those who have brought forward, and depicted the misery of the finite, have placed the thing in a false point of view ; they have represented the finite as if it ought to be, the independent, and the eternal ; and, therefore, showed how infinitely it is removed from it. Pain, death, and destruction are spoken of as the fate of all finite beings. All this is sufficiently felt in finite existence, but no one has ever showed that it ought to be different ; whereas, our consolation in this finite life must be, our hope in a life of infinite duration and happiness. But, if existence, properly understood, be an undisguised revelation of the Divinity, it is of the greatest importance that we do not misunderstand this, but, on the contrary, that we should vividly apprehend

it, and take a lesson from history, which proves to us how the human race, in the most different periods of time, and amongst entirely dissimilar races of people, has received instructions from these revelations. An intelligent use of this knowledge will serve to strengthen us in our happiest convictions; and, at the same time, elucidate, and purify, those opinions which are mixed up, or obscured, with error.

Let us imagine the intellectual image which a child, or a man of small, or slightly, developed faculties, must form to himself of existence. This image will comprehend little more than the necessities of external life, and the human relations most nearly approaching it. Whence the benefits proceed which he receives from society, he scarcely knows; he has a still less clear idea of the arrangement, and government, of the State; of course, therefore, we cannot expect a survey of the population of the earth, and the reciprocal intercourse of nations. Let our thoughts now turn to the picture which a well-informed citizen, or merchant, paints of existence; this will nearly comprise the objects excluded from the former limited view. Much in which there was crude experience, in which was no thought, or connection of thought, becomes, from this higher point of view, part of the human world of thought. Let us now proceed further, and imagine the picture which a man of great knowledge, and worldly experience, forms of existence: the connection of reason which we have discovered in the course of the development of the human race, and in the events of time, stand clearly before him; his world of reason is now far more comprehensive: however large may be the mass of experience which his thoughts can embrace, it is of less importance, in relation to the reason revealed in him, than was the case on the lower points of view. Let the same man now combine with this knowledge, a

general view over the arrangement, and the laws, of the material world, and his conception of the world will be still further enlarged. There may be various degrees of this, but we will pass over most of them, and imagine that he sees the events of the human race in their inward connection with the operations of nature; how large and important now will be his rational view over the whole of earthly existence! Let us still make another great leap in our ideas, and imagine that he possesses a deep insight into the whole structure of the world; now, again, much which was formerly a mere experience to him, will form itself into an idea, and thus, his rational view of the world will be wonderfully increased.

Here let us pause to make the proper application of all this. It is evident, so far as a man perceives the necessity of reason in what he has experienced, it will not appear to him as something merely Finite; he sees in it a portion of the Infinite. Inasmuch as all perceptive existence stands before him as a kingdom of reason, in the same proportion he comprehends its eternal, rational being. But this transition of the inhabitant of the earth into eternal existence is, nevertheless, infinitely limited, partly by the limitation of his faculties, partly by the inevitable influence of the external world. It is, certainly, in his power considerably to strengthen his rational existence, and to allow the impressions of the external world to have a smaller influence upon him, than it usually has upon the multitude; but he is very far from becoming a completely free citizen in the world of Reason.

It will not now be difficult to perceive, that the Finite must entirely disappear before God, who sees things at once in their whole rational being, and who is not subject to the influence of the senses in their finite form, but only knows them because the creative

powers, whence they derive their existence, live in His consciousness.

What a view is here presented of the responsibility of a Government which undertakes to guide, and direct, the external life of the people of a nation! What a lesson is here to be learnt by legislators who make laws for human government! What a lesson for all people, for all nations! How clearly it may be seen, that every well-conducted experiment, or investigation of the human nature, discovers to us a part of the external laws of the Infinite Whole, in regard to human government, with the same accuracy as this is proved by philosophy, in regard to the physical sciences!

The laws which govern animate, and inanimate, objects, and the powers by which those laws are made to act, constitute the only invariable thing in Nature. While all other things incessantly change; while the materials of which they are composed materially alter, the original powers, and their laws, remain stationary; they alone endure amidst the change.

Human beings, their feelings, and their motives, are ever changing under the influence of outward circumstances; but the powers by which life, and action, are sustained in human beings, as in all nature, are always, and everywhere, the same; and as that which gives objects their determined character, and forms infinite variety, is only the manner in which the actions take place in everything, the natural laws by which all is arranged, and guided, so it is with human beings; and, therefore, the aim, and endeavour, should be, by human laws to control, and direct, the actions in accordance with the natural laws, or Divine will, by which all is intended to be, and will, in the end, be arranged and guided. And thus, all things, animate, and inanimate, which are incessantly passing from one condition to another; in one constant growth out of the same

matter, by means of the same powers; will be hastened onwards to their ultimate end, and glorious destination.

Thus, by investigating moral laws by the same processes which we use in the investigation of physical laws, we shall attain to a more intimate, and assured, knowledge of those universal, and unchangeable, laws, which are called, the laws of Nature, by which all animate, and inanimate, objects are governed, and which is the Divine immutable Will.

If we could only discern that Will, and take that for our only guide in framing laws for our human government in all its details, human laws would then work with the same unvarying effect, and with the same harmony, as the unchanging laws of Nature; and, in spite of all opposing, and conflicting, currents which, until the final consummation of all things, when evil shall come to a perpetual end, must ever continue to act as disturbing forces,—would control, direct, and preserve, all created works for their glorious destiny. Thus, all natural, and human, laws would form together a unity which, viewed in their activity, would constitute the essence of the whole world, as now we see it in the whole world under the influence of natural laws only. Then we should see Divine, and human, laws united, and acting together in harmony. Then we might expect to see the time when, as we are told, “Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased:” or, as more literally translated, according to a recent reading of the original Hebrew—“and knowledge shall be transmitted with the rapidity of lightning.” Then we might expect to see our present boundaries of communication enlarged, and extended, beyond this world, into the countless spheres of yet unknown space; and all this as only preparatory to the infinitely higher, and more glorious, destiny,—of which, we are assured by the Word which never failed, and

which we, therefore, know awaits the faithful and repentant believer,—of walking, in his own human form, side by side with his Divine Master, his Lord, and Saviour.

If we investigate closely the grounds of our faith, we find that these views harmonise so perfectly with reason, that we may assert, with truth, that the harmony of these views, like the harmony of the laws of nature, consists in their being adapted to the dictates of reason ; or, rather, by the perfect coincidence of these views with the laws of Nature, and the laws of Reason.

If the faith of men in those laws which govern the unseen things of this world, were only equal to their faith in those laws which govern the material and visible things of this world, called the laws of Nature, they would find in the few precepts of Christianity, as given by the Divine Teacher, in His Sermon on the Mount, all that can be required for their guidance, in framing laws, and regulations, for human government. They would see that, almost all human laws are, in principle, and in detail, at variance with, and, generally, in the most important particulars, in direct opposition to, those Divine precepts. They would see that the daring presumption of man—which steps in with his law, between the Almighty Power, and the human criminal, and takes his life in this world, as a forfeit—is not only wholly unauthorised by any Christian precept, but is directly at variance with the letter, and spirit, of every precept of Christianity.

Men talk of expediency, and thereby bewilder, and deceive themselves. As if anything could be expedient to created beings, which is against the declared will of their Creator !

Again, men say, it is expedient that their fellow-creatures who have contracted debts, which they cannot pay, should be shut up in prisons, to pine away a certain portion, and often the whole remainder, of their

existence in solitary, and useless, wretchedness ; or, in the worse condition of association with more abandoned sufferers. Men say, this is expedient, and they make their laws accordingly. But the Great Teacher said nothing like this, and what He has said is most unlike this.

Again, men say, it is expedient to make the poor work, and pay, for the rich, and they make their laws accordingly.

But the Great Teacher has said, — “ The labourer is worthy of his hire.” “ What mean ye, to grind the faces of the poor ?” “ Woe to them that join house to house.” “ Rob not the poor because they are poor : neither oppress the afflicted : for the Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of them that spoiled them.” “ He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want.” How do we see the rich treating the poor ? The answer may be given in the words of Job :— “ They turn the needy out of the way ; the poor of the earth hide themselves together. Behold, as wild asses in the desert, go they forth to their work ; rising betimes for a prey : the wilderness yieldeth food for them and for their children They cause the naked to lodge without clothing, that they have no covering in the cold. They are wet with the showers of the mountains, and embrace the rock for want of a shelter. They pluck the fatherless from the breast, and take a pledge of the poor. They cause him to go naked, without clothing ; and they take away the sheaf from the hungry Men groan from out of the city, and the soul of the wounded crieth out : yet God layeth not folly to them For the morning is to them even as the shadow of death.”

And how wonderfully grand are the words of Job, in solemn protestation of his own integrity ! “ If I did despise the cause of my man-servant, or of my maid-

servant ; what then shall I do when God riseth up ? and when He visiteth, what shall I answer Him ? Did not He that made me in the womb make him ? and did not One fashion us in the womb ? If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or, have caused the eyes of the widow to fail : or, have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless have not eaten thereof ; if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering ; if his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep ; if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate : then let my arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone. For destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of His highness I could not endure. If I have made gold my hope, or have said to fine gold, Thou art my confidence ; if I rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because mine hand had gotten much ; if I beheld the sun when it shineth, or the moon walking in brightness ; and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand : this also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge : for I should have denied the God that is above." And that is the grand mistake of all mankind. They deny the God that is above. They set aside His laws, and set up their own. They make laws less in ignorance, than in wilfulness. They make gold their hope, and they say to gold, "Thou art my confidence." "Verily, they have their reward."

If science be good both in, and for, itself, and if it require no extraneous inducement to strive after it for its own sake, how much more should this apply to the search after moral truth, or, the knowledge of the Divine will in regard to human affairs ! How much more should this be pursued on its own account, and as an acknowledgment of that which is Divine within

us! How much more excellent, and, at least, equally certain, would be the results, than those results, great as they are, which are called the uses of science! Seen in this point of view, how much more the uses of natural science would be enlarged, and extended, and also our powers for the purposes of social life! Besides the general development, and perfection, which natural science endeavours to effect on our mental powers, by contributing to enlighten, and strengthen, our finite reason for governing the external world, we should have discovered the principle of those eternal laws, which are the Divine Will, for governing the internal world; that spirit which constitutes the eternal laws of reason, by which all created things are to be brought into perfect harmony with the Divine Will.

Impressed with this view, man would enter upon each occupation with a more acute vision, with increased confidence, and with a purer delight; and he would fulfil it as one who acts upon inward conviction, not following merely a precept from without. The soul would then, indeed, be brought into an inward peace, and in unison with the whole of nature, and would then, indeed, be delivered from every superstitious fear, which always originates in the idea, that it is possible that powers, which are contrary to the order of reason, might intrude into the eternal course of nature.

Such, in short, would be the effect of an active love of truth, beaming forth in innumerable ways from within. In reference to the external sphere of action of the powers in nature, the excellence of science — which may now be comprehended in the one great truth,—it teaches us to govern nature — would then, in reference to the internal sphere of action of the powers of the human mind, be comprehended in the still greater truth, — it teaches us to govern ourselves.

And thus we may be now permitted to catch a faint

glimpse of that glorious period, when all nature will be in subjection to the human will, and the human will in perfect harmony with the Divine will. That such a period will arrive is in perfect consistence with reason; but that it should ever arrive by any other means, is contradicted not only by reason, but directly by Divine revelation, as referred to by Job, and by St. Paul, when he said to the Hebrew people:—"What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him."

Thus, the whole existence of man will be enlarged, and will become more spiritual; and as it is evident that science, and its results, are mutually strengthened in their operations, so it will be still more apparent when man's existence is still further enlarged, by higher, and more spiritual, knowledge; and as science assists in protecting whatever it presents to us, so will that higher, and more spiritual, knowledge assist, and in a far higher degree, in protecting us from the evil against which we shall still have to contend in this world. As by science man learns to control one natural power by another, and often to guide to a natural end that which appears most threatening, so, by the higher spiritual knowledge, he will learn to control one spiritual power by another, and thus to become the instrument of Divine power for overcoming evil by good, and for converting that which appears most threatening, into perfect harmony with the Divine will. Thus, as science teaches us to alter the course of heaven's destructive lightning, to stem the

power of water, so that it may serve our purposes, to sway the consuming operations of fire, and to force from it the most important services; so this more intimate communion, and harmony, with the Divine will, may teach us to alter the course of human passions, and so to direct them, that they may serve our purposes in conformity with the Divine will, to sway the consuming operations of evil propensities, and to force from them the most important services, by only directing them into other channels, to a higher, and better, end. And, if the universal forces in nature be in direct opposition to the inner forces by which our body subsists, as science teaches us to find a remedy, an antidote against poison,—a cure, or even a protecting power, against sickness; and as science brings a union of forces by which an infection threatening life is weakened, or even destroyed; so, this union of still higher forces may teach us to find a remedy, an antidote against the poison of every evil in the human nature, by looking up in faith to that one universal remedy, and perfect antidote, for every evil which, to the Israelites in the desert, was symbolised in the brazen serpent on the pole, on which all who only looked were saved. Then, the strength of man, guided by the highest Reason, will no longer be regarded as a hostile work of nature,—then, will no longer be seen, as now, checking, retarding, and frequently destroying the fruits of civilising industry, and turning to misery and destruction, that which was intended to be a continual joy and blessing; for the strength of man, thus aided and supported,—thus guided and directed,—will have brought into subjection to him, and to his work, all that is hostile to the work of nature; and these forces, thus brought to work together in unison, will produce such abundant fruits, that all creation will rejoice, and praise the great, and gracious, Giver,—the Lord of all power and might,—the King

of Glory,—the God of infinite mercy, and universal love. In short, this unison would more effectually facilitate, and enlarge, and in various ways secure, our condition in life, by the removal of the various obstacles which prevent the free activity of the spiritual development of mankind.

Man, and the whole of nature, being then the revelation of an infinite rational will, and being guided by it, as an eternal guiding star, his chief task would be, to make laws for human government in perfect harmony therewith. The rights of the poor would then be seen to be precisely the same as those of the rich, and would be so regarded accordingly; for, it would then be clearly seen that neglect, or injury, of the one, would be equally neglect, or injury, of the other. It would then be seen, that all were born into this world with the same inherent, natural rights, and that it is equally for the well-being of all that these rights should be respected, until forfeited by being exercised in a manner inconsistent with social order,—that is, contrary to the Divine will. It would then be seen, that the best way of protecting the rights of property, which are artificial, or conventional, would be by extending the same protection to the inherent, or natural, rights of every human being.

And the same of Governments as of Individuals.

Governments would see, that their best security was in the well-being of the governed; that if Property had its rights, so, also, it had its duties, and that they would best preserve the one, by enforcing the due performance of the other. They would see that it was as essential for social order, and the well being of the people, to protect the poor in the enjoyment of their inherent, or natural, rights, as to protect the rich in the enjoyment of their artificial, or acquired, rights of property. They would see, that it was a violation of

the first principle of justice, and policy, to impose taxes on food, or raiment, or any other product of industry; and that justice, and policy, equally required that the necessities of the state should be provided for out of acquired property, and not out of the daily toil which was producing that property. They would see that, by reversing this just, and moral, rule, by taxing the daily labourer in his food, and raiment, they were committing the grossest injustice, and introducing elements of discord, and disruption, the tendency of which must be to disturb, and break up, social order, by letting in fraud, and violence, in all its various forms of perjury, and theft,—adulterations and poisonings,—smuggling and murder; all tending to demoralisation and disturbance, to the guilt and wretchedness of many, and to the certain injury of all. They would learn that, the powers of kings and rulers, could no more be misused with impunity, than could those powers be resisted with impunity, when lawfully and righteously exercised. And they would learn this solemn truth,—that right must prevail in the end, though thrones be overthrown, and governments be broken up, and nations be destroyed, and people be scattered. They would also learn, that the strength of a nation is in the people; that the strength of the ruler, or the government, is in the well-being of the whole people; and that the strength of the people is in their subjection to the Divine will; in short, that *the welfare of the people is the highest law*;—and that, to promote this, is the best and greatest work that man can do,—the highest to which he can attain,—and *that nothing is truly sublime but Moral Greatness*.

Everything which has a tendency to produce indifference to, or contempt for, this great maxim, tends to lower the general tone of the public mind, or to pervert the moral tastes of society; nor can limits be assigned

to the social deterioration which may be the consequence of a continued disregard of those elements of our nature, by which alone we can claim any kindred with the Divine. Foremost among these are justice, and humanity; in other words, an inviolable respect for the rights, and interests, of others; a fervent zeal for all that can contribute to the welfare of mankind, and an equally fervent abhorrence of all that augments the sum of misery upon earth, or tends to the debasement of our species. These are the qualities, or dispositions, without which can never be justly awarded to any man the title of great, as applied not to this or that faculty or endowment, but to the *human being*, the member of the family of mankind.

Nor are these qualities, or dispositions, ever exercised without great, and appreciable, results. As unerring as the laws of nature must be the operations of moral goodness, for both proceed from the same Cause—from the same Almighty Power, and Divine Spirit.

If these qualities, or dispositions, had been more fully exercised, the Divine Spirit would have been more clearly manifested in the world. If kings, and governments, had more fully recognised, and acknowledged, the Divine Spirit, how much greater and more powerful would have been their rule on earth—how much happier, wiser, and better, would have been the whole human race! If only justice, and humanity, had been more regarded, by more attention to the comforts and welfare of the people, how much greater would have been the portion of happiness to all, even in this present life of toil, and trial! If, instead of such costly preparations for their improvement, and benefit, in building gaols, reformatories, and workhouses, they had been left free to enjoy the fruits of their own labour, and to participate a little more in the mental acquirements of those whose lot had been cast in more easy circum-

stances, how much misery and guilt might have been spared — how many suffering and lost lives, perhaps souls, might have been saved ! He is the greatest man who shows how this may be, for nothing is truly sublime but moral greatness, for nothing else can claim kindred with the Divine, and that alone is great.

Thus we see that, the laws of nature, and the moral laws, are dictates of reason, originating from Divine Reason itself, are alike invariable and unerring, and work together in the most perfect harmony ; that this world in which the human race was created, and has been developed, and is ever being further developed, for higher and glorious ends ; in which it has received so many revelations of the all-penetrating, all-ruling Divine Reason, and in which reason encourages so many pre-sentiments of the numerous habitations which are promised to us in the house of our Father — that this world is governed by an Eternal Reason, whose mode of operation is recognised and acknowledged by us in the invariable laws of nature.

All believers are, of course, agreed in believing that God governs the world with infinite wisdom ; but, on the one side, it is asserted that the incalculable encroachments which are made by man's freedom in the progress of things, produces irregularities which cannot be removed by an all-embracing Divine legislation, but that they require particular decrees, demanded by the events, as is the case in the government of earthly states ; on the other hand, it is assumed that the Divine government of reason is so perfect that, without any after aid, it arranges those events produced by the irrationality of man in the rational plan of the whole. It might, therefore, appear that the mode of comprehension here followed attributes greater wisdom to God, than the one opposed to it, but it would be very wrong to allow such an appearance to rest upon the opposite

mode of comprehension. Those who assert the necessity of the arbitrary dealings of God, attribute to Him the greatest *possible* wisdom; but they think that an eternal legislation can only regulate those actions which must of necessity occur, and that it would be an *impossibility* that such a legislation could remedy the abuses of freedom.

But every one must feel a perfect conviction that the essential principles of morality are the same throughout the universe, and even our own imperfect reason may satisfy us, that the *impossibility* here assumed is not only a *possibility*, but, even to our small knowledge, and limited powers of reason, perfectly consistent with Divine Wisdom.

It is the opinion of some people that the perplexing encroachment of accidental causes, in the progress of things, cannot be adjusted without the supervision, and assistance, of an arbitrarily-acting being; but this is a mistaken idea: if we only know the nature of the disturbing cause, or of the disturbing causes, we can frequently prevent their effect. This is more certain to happen, the greater the understanding, and the insight, which are thus put into action. If all that we can accomplish as men be ever so little, still it shows us the possibility. To Infinite Reason infinitely more will be possible.

To illustrate by examples, and to begin with those which are easiest of comprehension. Let us transport ourselves back a century and a half ago. It was required that a clock should be carried on a voyage round the earth, and that it should constantly retain its regular course. If we only consider the principle, we must find that this is impossible; from the change of temperature, as well as other circumstances, the length of the delicate spring, and of the diameter of the pendulum which regulates the watch are altered; it is,

therefore, declared impossible that it can preserve its regular course; the maker of the clock, or some one sent by him, must accompany it to correct the irregularities. But no; this is not only unnecessary, but would be quite inadequate for the purpose, for the artist who understands the laws by which the effects happen, is able to add particular parts which extend by heat in such a way as to remove the error; and now, whether the captain of the vessel may choose to go to a hotter, or a colder climate, the course of the clock remains the same. The case is sufficiently familiar in our own times, but a century and a half has not elapsed since it was unknown.

By the use of steam-engines, great powers are put into activity; but a mistake in their management may be dangerous. The engineer may increase, or lessen, the fire as he pleases, he can even increase it to an unreasonable degree, and by that means give such an expansion to the steam that it would burst the boiler, if a contrivance had not been discovered to prevent it. That, as we all know, is the safety-opening, with the safety-valve of the boiler, which allows the steam to escape when its expansion is too great. In the earliest constructions of the steam-engine, some one was always obliged to be at hand to turn the cock, which either opened, or closed, the opening for the steam. Neglect, or oversight, must have produced evil consequences. Arrangements were afterwards contrived in which the engine did the work itself, and with greater security. The amount of resistance which the steam-engine has to overcome, frequently changes considerably. If the resistance were suddenly to cease, the velocity of the engine would be increased to a dangerous degree; but a plan has been invented which immediately lowers the steam, if the rapidity increases, and raises it again, if the rapidity lessens.

These examples may, perhaps, be thought too insignificant to be mentioned; but, at the same time, the light which they throw upon the subject is not to be despised. If it had been prophesied that exactly these counter-effects, and these means of prevention, would be discovered, most people would have thought it impossible. Such examples may, at least, serve as a warning to those who confidently wish to prove a thing is impossible, because they cannot understand how it can be accomplished; a totally different design from that which deduces the impossibility of a thing from an actual inward contradiction.

But now, to turn to an example which more nearly concerns the subject, and which is so great that it embraces within it innumerable smaller ones. Let us transport ourselves back to a time when men were, either everywhere, or on a large portion of the earth, in a very savage condition, without laws, or a civilised society. Each individual man endeavoured to use his unbridled will against others; there reigned universal civil war, in which murder, robbery, and every kind of oppression, met with no more opposition than the resistance which was offered by the sufferer to those who attacked him. Let us now imagine that the following question is put to a man in this condition:—Could we not introduce such a happy condition, in which the powerful would allow the weak to retain their own, the exasperated would renounce murder, and other violent deeds, and the impassioned man would curb his desires when they injured others? Roused to thought by the question, he would undoubtedly reply:—We can never ourselves produce such a condition: such a happy state of things could only be attained if a god were to come among us, who would protect the weak, and would threaten, and severely punish, the strong, if they did not obey him.

We who know what may be performed by laws, and by regulations for upholding the laws, are only astonished when, looking from them, we cast a glance at the wild forces which they have subjected in such a remarkable degree. Every desire which originates in the human breast to possess, or to enjoy, what is the object of desire to another, challenges a dispute; a dispute arouses more violent passions, and even grows easily into a dispute for life and death. What innumerable germs of wicked passions! If it were possible that men could assemble together in numbers, in a locality which had not been previously prepared for them by some legislation, and civilisation, the most frightful crimes would be of daily occurrence. But, when we look back at the succession of different conditions, which, as far as it reaches, is displayed to us by history in every country in which a higher social condition has been developed, we see how extraordinarily great are the difficulties which legislation has to overcome. However distant we are from being satisfied, with even the best social condition hitherto attained, still, those who preceded us at a great distance, are to be regarded, in comparison, as savage and lawless. Every one will be more strongly convinced of this by his own reflections on the social condition which history describes, the more detailed the historical picture which he forms for himself. But it will not be useless to observe, at present, though only in a few examples, the manner in which laws operate.

Man's desire to appropriate to himself whatever pleases him, belongs to the first objects of legislation; it must be restrained by severe punishments directed against the seizure of property belonging to others. The immediate effect is only to deter by terror; but he who would place therein the whole, or even the most powerful, effect of the law, is much mistaken.

Law countenances man's feeling for the justice of rational claims. He found it was necessary for the common welfare, indeed for common rational intercourse, that every one should be secure of that which, in accordance with reason, he had gained for himself. It was not requisite, for this end, that his ideas should be perfectly clear; it was sufficient that he remembered with displeasure every encroachment made upon his rights, perhaps even those, likewise, which had been made upon the rights of his friend, in order to give his approbation to the protecting law. But this law was also directed against many desires which he might himself feel to appropriate to himself the property of others. He would now be restrained by that law, but not by its menaces, for he has himself already approved of it; and he must now possess, although but dimly, a feeling for the reasonable demands towards which he should aim. The more the social arrangements are developed, securing the rights of each individual man, the stronger grows the inward consciousness of right, and this supports the laws. It originates in the inner mind of man; but it is awakened, and strengthened, by being outwardly realised. Therefore, the regulations for upholding the laws, and the disposition to approve them, strengthen one another, so that the security becomes greater, although the punishments are made less terrible.

Something similar may be said of the other dangerous propensities of man. What a desire of vengeance exists in him! This desire is often a natural feeling for justice, but its abuses are fearful. The laws place a barrier to it; they protect one man from the vengeance of another, but, when justice requires it, they further offer a satisfaction. However imperfect this may sometimes be, the universal knowledge of it softens, and lessens, the desire of vengeance in man. Hence it arises, that the know-

ledge of this outward reason protecting him, elevates his own rational life, and his respect for reason, which is connected with it.

These examples sufficiently point out many others, so that every reflecting mind will perceive, that laws do not only produce an immediate effect, but that also, by unfolding a disposition conformable to law, they weaken, and extinguish, the force of evil designs, even when they are the most extravagant; and should a whole people simultaneously disturb the existing regulations, this disposition yet strengthens those who labour for law, and order, and does not allow itself to be entirely extirpated by those who are seized with a mania for destruction, but often restrains them, and, indeed, calls them back.

If, therefore, we now consider that laws have, we may say, many thousand times, prevented crimes, and that, therefore, the foresight of human lawgivers has often, for centuries, indeed, thousands of years, prevented the abuse of the free-will of man, we thus see the possibility of his actions being governed without his being himself oppressed. The direction which laws have given to the free-will of man, in many respects beneficial, has been no oppression, for he is free, and can resist the laws; but even when he goes astray he is still the expression of a rational being, who cannot entirely escape from Reason, and from respect to the surrounding government of Reason.

However small we may esteem, all that human wisdom has here accomplished, in comparison with that which is performed by the Divine government of the world,—and infinitely small that must be,—yet, multiply this performance of the limited wisdom of man, with Infinite Wisdom, and you will find the result of the calculation to be, that the infinite wisdom of the Eternal Almighty God is able to guide everything without making casual alterations. Do not let us be disturbed, because much remains in the government of the world

which we cannot conceive, because the finite cannot grasp the infinite in its totality, indeed, that it is only able to comprehend some of its great features. Those who believe in an arbitrary government, are accustomed to bring forward examples which cannot be explained by the universal laws of existence. It is very possible that the events thus selected may be inexplicable to us with our present knowledge; indeed, it is not difficult to find instances of events which can never be explained by human knowledge; but such inexplicable things cannot refute a mode of comprehension which, in accordance with its nature, does not pretend to explain each individual event.

When opponents triumphantly bring forward inexplicable events, we can reply to them:—In common with us, you cannot understand these events, but you fancy you understand them: you believe that you are initiated into God's decrees, and speak accordingly; we know that we do not understand them, and openly declare it. They may, perhaps, assert that they are guided by religion, that they judge by the will of God revealed to them by religion; but only let them show us a single instance of an event, where it can be applied without the addition of some of their own wisdom.

This mode of contemplation is far from denying Divine influence; on the contrary, when it accounts for the laws by which events happen,—for example, those by which the Roman Empire fell, the Stuarts were banished from England, and the North American States were formed,—it pre-supposes that these laws originate in the will of God, in consequence of the eternal nature of this will, not in consequence of arbitrary decrees, produced by the errors of human freedom. It is acknowledged, as an unavoidable imperfection, that we cannot explain each individual part in the laws deduced from the history of events; but it is affirmed that neither intellect, nor true piety, gains anything by

attempting to conjecture the designs of God in incomprehensible events.

Many imagine it is a greater comfort to suppose we are under the protection of a master who, humanly speaking, has a constant watchful eye over us, than if we only place our trust in the eternal laws of the will of God. This opinion appears to rest on a misunderstanding. Let us examine it by an example taken from earthly circumstances. Let us imagine a man who intends to make a journey, and that, with regard to the road he has to travel, he must choose between two which lie in different countries; in one, personal safety rests upon wise laws, and in regulations appertaining to them; whilst the other is so constituted, that it has been impossible for the prince, although wise, powerful, and good, to introduce the same laws as in the former state, though he is ready to remedy this defect by giving the traveller a strong guard for his protection; in which of these two countries can he expect to travel with the greatest security? We may easily apply this to the two methods of representing the government of the world. The one assumes that the reasonable management of the world is sufficient to give us all the security which is really found in existence, the second requires the assistance of arbitrary inspection. In order to judge correctly in this case, we must, above all, remember that we must not demand a more secure protection than that which is in reality met with.

It appears that those who do not find in their first comprehension all the security they desire, require a far greater security than what in reality exists. We should misunderstand that mode of comprehension if we did not remember, that security does not exist in consequence of an accumulation of the scattered laws of nature, but by means of legislation in its entire con-

nection and order, determined by Eternal Reason. When, it is said, "that we are everywhere surrounded by supernatural holy powers, which are able to influence nature apart from God," we may, if we wish, comprehend the meaning of these words, by the more particular explanation, that we then understand by nature, finality alone; not the whole of nature, of which, however, finality is but a revelation.

It would not be impossible to imagine that higher endowed beings formed a part of the eternal reasonable arrangement, who, unseen by us, watch over inferior beings like magistrates in the government of a state; but the experience which we possess of what really happens, does not appear to demand this idea. We, certainly often hear things related, which would be inexplicable, if we did not believe in higher arbitrary arrangements; but that anything is inexplicable without a certain pre-supposition is, generally, a very weak proof of its reality. We can only safely come to this conclusion, when we are certain that we penetrate all the possibilities concerning the thing; but this is not the case here; for there are innumerable conditions and events, whose importance for the welfare and happiness of individual man, we cannot explain out of this pre-supposition.

Here belong all those effects, which, in consequence of universal laws, act upon innumerable individuals. The same storm passes over great tracts of land and sea, destroys ships, tears up trees, throws down houses, throughout following the same laws. Sometimes floods have desolated great tracts of land, and in one night consigned many thousands of human beings to death. Earthquakes have produced as universal destruction. The same drought, the same untimely rain, the same severe winter, happens to all the inhabitants of a great extent of country.

Now, we can, and must believe, that the effect of all such events which happen in common to very different people, belong to the universal harmony of reason, but we must, at the same time, confess our want of capacity to comprehend the individual parts of the event.

If there be, therefore, such an unexampled overpowering number of such events which we cannot explain, how can we arrive at that conclusion? It will, perhaps, be said, that it is exactly this great sum of inexplicable events which compels us to believe in an arbitrary higher interference; but if we believe in this pre-arrangement, and attempt to comprehend the possibility of an arbitrary perfect power, which balances all the contradictions which the oneness of the occurrence has here brought together, we shall certainly feel our weakness. Then let both parties confess their incapacity to comprehend this part of existence, and let not the one attempt to procure an advantage at the expense of the other, by merely pointing out his incapacity.

There are many who, from another point of view, will be dissatisfied with the mode of comprehension here defended. In consequence of this idea, they think that God has no more to do, after he has created the world. Although this is unimportant as an objection, and although we should rather consider the comprehension of the eternal government of Reason, than enter into inquiries about the nature of God, yet we must still show, out of what a misunderstanding the comprehension here defended originated. It pre-supposes, namely, that God only once acted, and then ceased; in place of which He constantly acts, and constantly makes laws; were it possible for this to cease, the world would immediately cease; He incessantly creates the entire manifold existence, and this lives in Him. The human notions of repose, fatigue, &c.,

which we can never apply to God, have nothing in common with these views.

Thus it may be seen that the ancient doctrine of the invariability of the laws of nature is an incontrovertible truth which, by no means, leads to a denial of religion and morality, as many have been led to believe, by a false comprehension of what is required by nature; but that well-grounded natural science shows that these laws are dictates of reason, originating from Divine reason itself, and that this doctrine, if properly understood, is in the most perfect harmony with true morality and religion.

A union of several powers, where each acts according to its own law, as in the well-known experiment already referred to, of producing ice by fire, is so far from being of rare occurrence, that it is rather the usual mode of action in nature; thence an infinite variety of effect is produced: but with all this variety in time and space, it is only the effects which suffer a change; the laws which they obey remain the same. It is not the laws of action which undergo a change, but the actions themselves, in proportion as they coincide with the course of the laws which govern the whole.

As in nature the same forces always act according to the same laws, so it must be in those universal laws yet unrevealed. Actions which are really alike must proceed from the same forces; and in order to investigate the laws of forces, we must endeavour to recognise each particular force in its purity, its laws of action in its simplicity; but, at the same time, never forget that each force is only a part of the Infinite Whole, and only subsists so far as that exists.

As we endeavour to comprehend infinite reason in nature with our limited capacities, and must constantly be distrustful of our own knowledge, and only confide

in our representation of the thoughts of Nature in so far as they are clearly determined, and are in harmony with all which, according to our perfect conviction, is indisputably true; so, in our endeavour to comprehend infinite reason in the Divine will with our limited capacities, we must constantly be distrustful of ourselves, and of our own knowledge, and only confide in our interpretation of that will in so far as it has been revealed to us in the Divine Word, or is in harmony with all which, according to our perfect conviction, is indisputably true. We must often, as in the natural sciences, have to compare the evidence of reason with experience; and we must endeavour to change the evidence of experience into an evidence of reason. Experience, which is the basis of universal natural philosophy, will only be used to supply the want of higher evidence. Expediency will be no longer admitted to supply that want. Our every-day experiences will be tried by a higher, and safer, test than expediency. We shall discover by thought while we turn our attention upon them.

To gain knowledge in this manner is called, *to observe*.

But we shall not, as in the natural sciences, draw our conclusions from natural things, but from the spirit, or essence, of these, so far as it may enable us to discern an evidence of reason, or indication of the Divine mind, or will.

And, as in nature there are many experiences which are not immediately exhibited to us in a very intelligible manner, in order to detect their essential character more narrowly, we must endeavour to bring the objects together, so that their effects may be comprehensible to us. In other words, in order to see, as perfectly as possible, the mode of operation, we must, as in investigations of nature, understand how we can actually set

them in action, and, as it were, compel them to act under our eyes. This is called in natural philosophy, to make experiments—to experimentalise. As nature obliges us to make daily experience, so she invites us to make observations. Each experience easily passes with every thinking man into a closer contemplation, which leads him to actual observations. By these means are discovered the operations of the laws of nature which are, to a certain extent, brought under the direction, and control, and made subservient to the will, of man; and by like processes should be discovered the operations of those higher laws by which man is to be brought under the direction and control, and made subservient to, the will of God.

Like the philosopher, in his investigations of the works of nature from a mere arbitrary direction of attention to the point which particularly constitutes the object of inquiry, he should soon begin to compare, to distinguish, and to arrange, the whole variety perceptible to the senses which appear to be in connection. He should endeavour to sharpen his senses by practice, to strive to measure their power, to prove them, and to determine them; and, as far as possible, to correct their mistakes. Like the philosopher, by habit he will acquire a readiness to discern what is peculiar, to find out less remarkable similarities and differences, and exactly to distinguish what belongs to each individual part or case. Where this no longer suffices, he will seek to facilitate his observations by comparisons in a wider circle of experience. Like the philosopher, he will learn how to enlarge, and to render more distinct, those objects which were too small, or too remote, for the power of his senses; in short, he will investigate more and more into nature, and the human mind, and, like the philosopher, where he finds nature operating with variously combined forces, he will seek to retain

some of them, in order to allow the others to work more freely,—even to retain all the others, in order to let one singly express itself with freedom. He must learn how to bring one sense before the judgment-seat of the others, in order that the more acute may clearly comprehend what the weaker only dimly perceive. In short, he must everywhere seek to compel the most secret powers of the human mind to reveal themselves, and endeavour to direct them in their proper course.

As in natural science, so in all metaphysical inquiries, experience only becomes instructive to us by a correct combination. To observe, is to detect the actions of nature; but we shall not advance far in this path unless we have a notion of its character. So, in regard to human actions, we shall not advance far in this path unless we have a correct notion of human nature. To make experiments, is to lay questions before nature; but he alone can do that beneficially who knows what he should ask. This is universally true, being equally applicable to all investigations. Through the whole art of experience it is, therefore, necessary that upon one side the inquirer should constantly retain the whole in his view, for, otherwise, it is impossible to have a clear representation of the parts; on the other side, that he should regard nothing as beneath his attention, for it still belongs to the whole. He should never forget that the forces by which life, and motion, are preserved throughout nature, are found in the least and most insignificant, as well as in the greatest, and most remarkable, objects; and from all this he may learn to perceive the same in regard to motives, and conduct, in the human mind. Then the inquirer into the human mind, like the investigator in natural science, will enter upon his work with the utmost earnestness and attention, reverentially acknowledging that it is the Eternal Source of nature who

speaks to him, even in the most insignificant object. With this spirit, and with this constant view of the whole, what may appear to others the smallest trifles, will lose their insignificance to him; he will elevate them to himself, and not allow himself to be drawn down by them. He will enter into the inquiry without passion, or prejudice, without self-interest, or any personal motive, but the love of truth, and justice, for the equal good of all. He will not content himself with a single one-sided experience. He will seek everywhere to combine it with others, to deduce the one from the other, and to arrange all in such a manner that the whole course of observations, or experiments, represent, as in nature, one universal and harmonious law. It is only by giving the observations and experiments, which are made, such a *connection*, such an extension and variety, that his investigation can procure him knowledge, and become more than an imperfect account of an isolated phenomenon. And so, as in natural science, we must conduct our investigations of the forces which influence, and direct, the motives, and actions, of the human mind; and, finally, like the astronomer, or the naturalist, in order to be certain that our senses have not deceived us, we must frequently repeat our observations, and experiments; and, to go on improving, we must go on making our observations, and experiments; and thus,—go on learning and improving for ever. Then we shall have a higher understanding for the mysteries of our religion,—a clearer insight into the grounds of our faith.

1. That God, the Creator and Preserver of heaven and earth, is Love Itself, and Wisdom Itself, or Good Itself, and Truth Itself: that He is One both in Essence and in Person, in whom, nevertheless, is the Divine Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; which are the Essential Divinity, the Divine Humanity, and

the Divine Proceeding, answering to the soul, the body, and the operative energy in man : and that the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, is that God.

2. That God Himself descended from heaven as Divine Truth, which is the Word, and took upon Him human nature, for the purpose of removing from man the powers of hell, and restoring to order all things in the spiritual world, and all things in the Church : that He removed from man the powers of hell, by combats against, and victories over them ; in which consisted the great work of redemption : that by the same acts, which were His temptations, the last of which was the passion of the cross, He united in His humanity, Divine truth to Divine good, or Divine wisdom to Divine love, and so returned into His Divinity in which He was from eternity, together with, and in, His glorified humanity ; whence He for ever keeps the infernal powers in subjection to Himself : and that all who believe in Him, with the understanding, from the heart, and live accordingly, will be saved.

3. That the Sacred Scripture, or Word of God, is Divine Truth itself, containing a spiritual sense heretofore unknown—whence it is divinely inspired, and holy in every syllable—as well as a literal sense, which is the basis of its spiritual sense, and in which Divine Truth is in its fulness, its sanctity, and its power ; thus, that it is accommodated to the apprehension both of angels and men. That the spiritual and natural senses are united by correspondences, like soul and body, every natural expression, and image, answering to, and including, a spiritual and Divine idea : and thus that the Word is the medium of communication with heaven, and of conjunction with the Lord.

4. That the government of the Lord's Divine love, and wisdom, is the Divine Providence, which is universal, exercised according to certain fixed laws of

order, and extending to the minutest particulars of the life of all men, both of the good and of the evil: that in all its operations, it has respect to what is infinite, and eternal, and makes no account of things transitory, but as they are subservient to eternal ends; thus, that it mainly consists, with man, in the connection of things temporal, with things eternal; for that the continual aim of the Lord, by His Divine Providence, is to join man to Himself, and Himself to man, that He may be able to give him the felicities of eternal life: and that the laws of permission are also laws of Divine Providence, since evil cannot be prevented without destroying the nature of man as an accountable agent; and because, also, it cannot be removed, unless it be known, and cannot be known, unless it appear. Thus, that no evil is permitted, but to prevent a greater, and all is overruled, by the Lord's Divine Providence, for the greatest possible good.

5. That man is not life, but is only a recipient of life from the Lord, who, as He is Love Itself, and Wisdom Itself, is also Life Itself, which life is communicated by influx to all in the spiritual world, whether belonging to heaven, or to hell, and to all in the natural world; but is received differently by every one, according to his quality, and consequent state of reception.

6. That man, during his abode in the world, is, as to his spirit, in the midst between heaven and hell, acted upon by influences from both, and thus is kept in a state of spiritual equilibrium between good and evil, in consequence of which he enjoys free-will, or freedom of choice, in spiritual things, as well as in natural, and possesses the capacity of either turning himself to the Lord, and His kingdom, or turning himself away from the Lord, and connecting himself with the kingdom of darkness. And that, unless a man had such freedom of choice, the Word would be of no use; the Church

would be a mere name ; man would possess nothing by virtue of which he could be conjoined to the Lord, and the cause of evil would be chargeable on God Himself.

7. That man, at this day, is born into evil of all kinds, or with tendencies towards it: that, therefore, in order to his entering the kingdom of heaven, he must be regenerated, or created anew, which great work is effected in a progressive manner, by the Lord alone, by charity, and faith, as mediums, during man's co-operation: that, as all men are redeemed, all are capable of being regenerated, and, consequently, saved, every one according to his state: and that the regenerate man is in communion with the angels of heaven, and the unregenerate with the spirits of hell: but that no one is condemned for hereditary evil, any further than he makes it his own by actual life; whence, all who die in infancy are saved, special means being provided by the Lord, in the other life, for that purpose.

8. That repentance is the first beginning of the Church in man; and that it consists in a man's examining himself both in regard to his deeds, and his intentions, in knowing, and acknowledging, his sins, confessing them before the Lord, supplicating Him for His aid, and beginning a new life: that to this end all evils, whether of affection, of thought, or of life, are to be abhorred, and shunned, as sins against God, and because they proceed from infernal spirits, who, in the aggregate, are called the Devil and Satan; and that good affections, good thoughts, and good actions, are to be cherished, and performed, because they are of God, and from God: that these things are to be done by man, as of himself. Nevertheless, under the acknowledgment, and belief, that it is from the Lord, operating in Him, and by Him: that so far as man shuns evils, as

sins, so far they are removed, remitted, or forgiven ; so far also he does good, not from himself, but from the Lord ; and in the same degree he loves truth, has faith, and is a spiritual man ; and that the Decalogue teaches what evils are sins.

9. That charity, faith, and good works, are unitedly necessary to man's salvation ; since charity, without faith, is not spiritual, but natural ; and faith, without charity, is not living, but dead ; and both charity, and faith, without good works, are merely mental and perishable things, because without use, or fixedness ; and that nothing of faith, of charity, or of good works, is of man, but that all is of the Lord, and all the merit is His alone.

10. That baptism, and the holy supper, are sacraments of Divine institution, and are to be permanently observed ; baptism being an external medium of introduction into the Church, and a sign representative of man's purification, and regeneration ; and the holy supper being an external medium, to those who receive it worthily, of introduction, as to spirit, into heaven, and of conjunction with the Lord, of which also it is a sign and seal.

11. That immediately after death, which is only a putting off of the material body, never to be resumed, man rises again in a spiritual, or substantial, body, in which he continues to live to eternity ; in heaven, if his ruling affections, and thence his life, have been good ; and in hell, if his ruling affections, and thence his life, have been evil.

12. That now is the time of the second advent of the Lord, which is a coming, whether in person visible, or not in person visible, in the power and glory of His Holy Word : that it is attended, like His first coming, with the restoration to order of all things in the spiritual world, where the wonderful Divine operation, com-

monly expected under the name of the Last Judgment, has, in consequence, been performed; and with the preparing of the way for His Universal Church on the earth,—the first Christian Church having, spiritually, come to its end, or consummation, through evils of life, and errors of doctrine, as foretold by the Lord in the Gospels: and that this universal, or second Christian Church, which will be the crown of all Churches, and will stand for ever, is what was respectively seen by John, when he beheld the holy city, New Jerusalem, descend from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

The natural body, being in itself insensible matter, can never constitute the real man, but is only an instrument annexed to him, that the end of his creation may be promoted by a residence, for a season, in this world of nature. When the material body ceases to be in a state capable of being such an instrument, he is said to die. Not that the man suffers the extinction of his life; he is only separated from that outward covering, by which he communicated with this world, and its concerns. The scene of his existence is now transferred to another world, in which he continues to live, not an unsubstantial vapour, or a mere phantom, but a real man. For man is a man, because he possesses a soul, or spirit, endued with the faculty of knowing, and loving, his God, and it is by virtue of this alone that he is immortal. When, therefore, man passes, as to his spirit, from this natural world, into the spiritual, he takes with him all that belongs to him as a man. Nothing is left behind but the mere earthly covering, which he wants no more, and which, therefore, will never be resumed. Without it, he is equally in a body as before, but in a body of spiritual, and never-dying substance.

- Whilst, therefore, we, in the obscurity of our natural

state, mourn over the departure of a beloved one, the angels of heaven, who attend on the resurrection of every translated spirit, are welcoming that arrival in the mansions of eternity. "As touching the dead, that they rise," saith the Lord to the unbelieving Sadducees, "have ye not read, in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living."

Against the fear, then, of the death of the body, we have sufficient antidote. But there is a death which has terrors even in the estimation of the wise; and of which, therefore, if we be wise, we shall take heed, while we are yet continued in bodily life. "Be not afraid," saith the Lord, "of them who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: fear him, who, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell: yea, I say unto you, fear him." The death, then, which all should fear, is spiritual death, or the death of the soul. This death is induced by the love, and life, of evil, and is, in truth, the work of our own hands. Wherefore, let us not deceive ourselves; let us ever bear in mind that the interior life of every one follows him to the eternal world, and, thus, that a good life terminates in heaven, and a bad life terminates in hell. And the Lord saith, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Man's state, also, after he has entered eternity, can no more be changed: wherefore the Lord saith, likewise, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." "Blessed," then, as the Lord further declares, "Blessed are they who do His commandments,

that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

With respect, however, to those dear ones who die in infancy, as they have never committed sin, nor made the evils of their hereditary nature their own by actual life, they are delivered, by natural death, from all danger of making shipwreck of their souls. They are placed under the immediate care of those angels of whom the Lord speaks, when he saith, "Of these little ones, I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven." They grow to a maturity of pure love, and wisdom, which are the qualities that make an angel, and so enter into the inmost enjoyments of the heavenly kingdom.

But, as for us, who have arrived in this world to the full use of our reason, we are to give account of our works. Knowing, therefore, the importance of the great change which we, also, must soon inevitably experience, let us, henceforth, make it our constant endeavour to prepare to meet it. Let us seek the Lord while He may be found, and call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. So shall we be ready, when called, to meet our Holy Judge. So shall we hear Him say to each of us,—“Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

If the reader should here ask,—“What has all this to do with a treatise on taxation?” let him find the answer in his own reflections. If he be one whose lot is cast in the poor and humble class of society, he may learn, whilst endeavouring to better his condition in

this present life, to regard his hardest trials here, as nothing in comparison with the joys in the place prepared for him in the future and eternal life, if he only observe the precepts here referred to; and so he may go on his way, ever hoping, and rejoicing. If he be one whose lot is cast in the middle, or, as it is called, the respectable, class of society, he may learn, that, whilst pursuing his respectable calling, in the midst of many blessings and comforts of civilised life, he belongs to that class which exercises the greatest influence over all the other classes, and that he will certainly be held accountable for the manner in which he exercises that influence, especially by his own example, for the benefit of the apparently less favoured class; and he will do well to remember the words spoken unto all mankind:—that “With the same measure that they mete withal, it shall be measured to them again.” If he be one whose lot is cast in the upper, or, as it is called, the highest class of society, he may learn that he has been entrusted with a great trust, for the performance of which he will be held responsible; that, in his character of trustee for the people, he will be held accountable not only for all that he has done, which he ought not to have done, but also for all that he has left undone, which he ought to have done. Thus, all may be led to reflect on the special duties of their respective stations,—to mark their own neglects, and short-comings,—and thus, all may learn, that the best way of serving their own interests is, by faithfully performing their own duties; that riches, and power, are sacred and responsible trusts, and that the only real enjoyment from the possession of these gifts is, in using them for the purposes for which they were given, and which, all must see, was for one common good. They will see that, whether tried by the rules, and maxims, of political economy, or the precepts, and doctrines, of Christianity, the

present system of legislating for the people is neither reconcileable with reason, nor with justice and humanity, that such system being irreconcilable with our reason, must be inconsistent with Divine wisdom, and, therefore, in opposition to the Divine will; and it will be seen that, as all our hopes for the present, and for the future, must be in Divine goodness, which must ultimately prevail, and be universally established on earth, as in heaven, it is impossible that our present system of legislation should tend to the present good or eternal welfare of the people; that the responsibility of the evil consequences is with those who assume, and exercise, this power; and though ignorance may be the excuse for some, yet this will not avert the evil consequences in this life; and the plea of ignorance may be less to be relied on by those who reject all warnings of the evil, and neglect all opportunities of self-instruction.

And this is the answer to the reader's question; — to give this warning, and to offer this opportunity, is the object of "The People's Blue Book." To show the people that the laws of Nature are the immutable laws of God, ever working with unerring certainty: that Reason, which is Truth, is ever directing all created things, with the same unerring purpose, for the consummation of the Divine Will, in the final destruction of everything opposed thereto: that the permitted free-agency of man may retard the final end of evil, but cannot prevent it, and may involve himself in the destruction; and that they who by their acts are helping to hasten the final end, — as all in every station have the power to do by simply doing the duties of their respective stations, — are insuring to themselves the highest attainable happiness ever intended for them in this life, and greater eternal happiness than is permitted to any one, in this life, even to imagine; whilst they who by their acts or neglects—

by following their own selfish pursuits of pleasure, or ambition,—or, by neglecting the opportunities which have been afforded to them of improving the mental, or bodily condition of others—are retarding that end,—are destroying their most substantial happiness in this life, and endangering their everlasting happiness in the eternal life to come, by incurring that awful responsibility which, we know from the highest authority, accompanies the misused talents.

To show all this to all people, is the great object of “The People’s Blue Book.” Many may be induced to read it by the title of “Taxation,” as touching their pockets; and they may see in it nothing more, and take no interest in anything beyond. To all of them, this compilation must seem a strange, incongruous, mass of confusion: and long before they come to the end, they will, probably, have thrown it down with indifference, if not with contempt; and with a sort of feeling that they have been deceived by a false title, to buy what they did not want, and to read what they did not care for. But many may also be induced to read it with the same object, and, having satisfied their first curiosity, may be induced to read it again, for something they have found more than they expected, and which they think they only imperfectly understand, but which they think they understand enough of, to wish to know more of. And so, they will read it again,—and, perhaps again. And they will think it over and over again, until they begin to perceive how wonderfully it is all held together, like a compact chain, link by link, one end of which is down on earth, and concerns the temporary present, the other end of which is up in heaven, and concerns the everlasting future. And then, they will reflect for themselves, on many things which are left—left intentionally—for self-reflection. And they will keep this book by them, that they may refer to it again and again, from time to time;

and this may lead them to read, and study, the Book of Books, from which is taken whatever of enduring worth may be here found; and then they will derive the comfort of renewed hope, and the refreshment of renewed strength; and that will be the evidence to them that the Spirit is from the Lord. And they will talk of this book to their friends, and neighbours; and they will recommend them to buy it, that they may read it, and understand it for their own sakes; and they will lend it not to any one who can afford to buy it, that every man and woman in the kingdom may have their own copy of "The People's Blue Book," and always in their own possession; to show how, in the memorable words of Henry IV. of France, "every poor man may have a fowl to boil in his pot on a Sunday;" or, in other words, how the poorest labourer may obtain, by his daily toil, a sufficiency of food, fuel, and raiment.

And every father and mother of a family may learn from this book to teach their children, from the Book of Books, how they may become worldly wise, and, at the same time, heavenly wise;—how they may improve their worldly condition, and, at the same time, work out their own salvation. And may the Lord bless the work, and may all the praise and glory be to Him, unto whom alone, all praise and glory is due! Those who now see innovation in change, may then learn that seeming innovations may be really restorations; or returns to the right course by the sudden correction of great errors, resulting from the accumulation of imperceptibly small ones; a striking instance of which is afforded in "the change of the style." They will see, that such a restoration is, as Archbishop Whately says,—“but the scouring of a room, removing in an hour or two, the dirt which had been gathering for several days, which is only called, *keeping it clean*, not changing it:” that, to say that no change shall take place, is to pretend to

control the course of the sun. And they will say, in the words of Lord Bacon, before quoted, "since things alter for the worse spontaneously, if they be never altered for the better designedly, when is the evil to end?" They will see, that truth should be the guide, as well as the object, and that neither human applause, nor human censure, is to be taken as the test of truth; but either should set us upon testing ourselves. And, so, as before said, like the astronomer or the naturalist, in order to be certain that our senses have not deceived us, we must frequently repeat our observations, and experiments; and, to go on improving, we must go on making our observations, and experiments; and thus go on learning, and improving, for ever. And so, as before said, we shall do well to bear in mind that most wise maxim of Lord Bacon, already quoted, with the commentary thereon,—to "make a stand upon the *ancient* way, and look about to discover what is the *best* way;"—"neither changing at once anything that is established, merely because of some evils actually existing, without considering whether something, that is on the whole better, can be substituted; nor, again, steadily rejecting every plan or system, that can be proposed, till one can be found that is open to no objections at all. For nothing framed or devised by the wit of man ever was, or can be, perfect."

We may also usefully remember another maxim of the same great philosopher; that "he who wills the end must will the means." And that it is the part of wisdom,—in the words of his wise commentator,—"*To begin reforming at once:—to proceed in reforming, steadily and cautiously: and to go on reforming for ever.*"

THE END.

LONDON :
Printed by SPOTTISWOODE & Co.
New-street Square.





